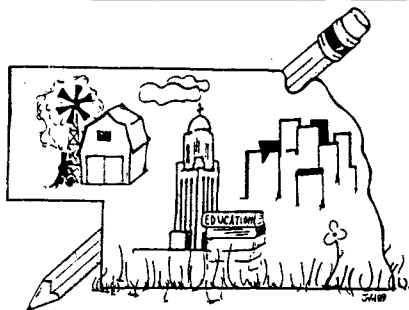


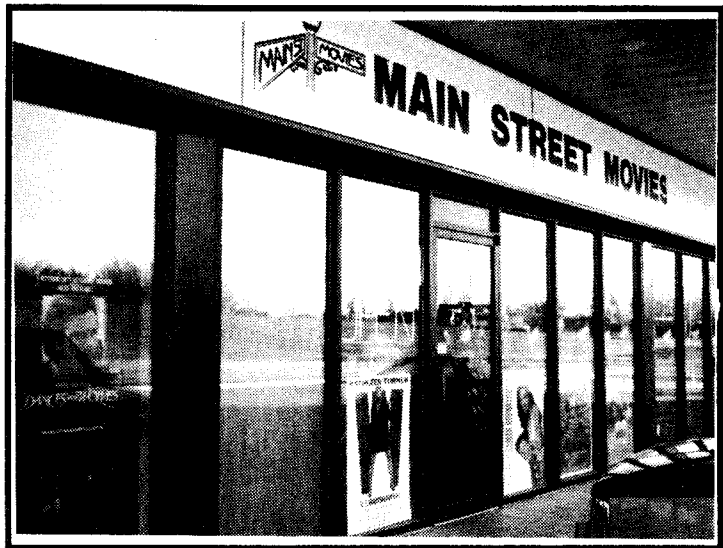
The Nebraska Observer

Vol. 6, No. 12, November 27, 1991



Examining the Community Standard

Activist Attorney General Campaigns Against Porn in Sarpy County



One of seven stores on the attorney general's list

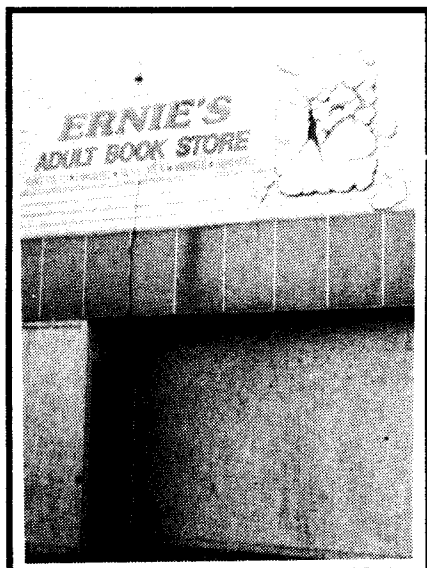
by Frances Mendenhall

Nebraska's attorney general has taken on a new mission. He wants to help a citizen's group get rid of X-rated videos in its community.

Omaha for Decency is the group. Omaha, however, does not have any video rental stores that specialize in X-rated movies, due to the militant work for the last ten years of City Prosecutor Gary Buccino, who successfully prosecuted in that area and continues to watch for violations.

So what is Omaha for Decency's complaint? Seven stores in Sarpy County which, in addition to their selection of regular movies, also have a collection of adult videos available in a separate room which only people over 18 can enter. To get rid of the videos, they must prove that the material is obscene according to community standards, defined by a jury trial.

Omaha for Decency is not just a handful of do-gooders. According to their president Don Kohls, they have a mailing list of 1300, including churches.



A store in Council Bluffs where "three out of four prosecution attempts have failed." "Gag gifts, lingerie, novelties, videos, arcades."

About 900 individuals receive their newsletter, 200 of whom reside in Sarpy County. They were started in 1986 and incorporated as a non-profit corporation in December, 1988. This year in a particularly visible effort, they put up twenty billboards that say "Real Men Don't Use Porn" in the area, all of which were sponsored by churches.

Kohls is also concerned about children.

"I have seen kids in the adults-only rooms with their parents twice," he said, and complained that the clerk did nothing. If the parents are liberal enough to take the children into the rooms, he reasoned, they probably do not take precautions to keep the children from viewing the material in the home. Having hardcore porn on one side and regular videos in the rest of the store is "a breeding ground for pedophile activity," he said.

Nonetheless, the group's hope that a jury of their fellow citizens will see obscenity in the same light they do may be unrealistic, given the volume of traffic in the stores and the fact that the community has not previously raised objections.

The Attorney General's office does not have a statewide plan to eliminate pornography; indeed only a short walk from their office is Lincoln's "Cinema X" an all night adults-only video arcade and rental store. But Stenberg is willing to leave the prosecution of Lancaster County pornography in the hands of Lancaster County Attorney and fellow Republican Gary Lacey. Sarpy County

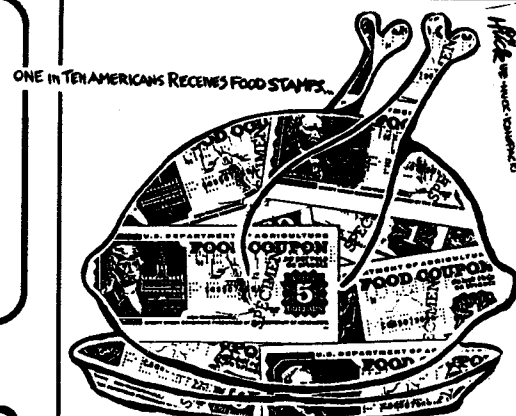
was different; the case got their attention because the citizens were unable to get the support they needed for their cause from their county prosecutor, Democrat Mike Wellman.

County Attorney: No Complaints

Wellman, however, does not think that Omaha for Decency's opinion is reflective of the standard of the community. It is the community standard which ultimately defines pornography, according to the Miller vs. California, the Supreme Court decision of 1973 which established the criteria most often cited.

Wellman points out that the community has lived with the situation as it now exists for ten years without a single complaint (until the recent letters from Omaha for Decency.) Wellman says he is in a position to know, since before he held the office of county attorney, he was deputy county attorney under Pat Kelley. Altogether, Wellman has been in that office for seventeen years. Besides, he recalls, he made a special effort in the spring of 1990 when he campaigned for his present job to find out just how people felt about this issue, since it was March of that year when Omaha for Decency first presented his office with their agenda. "The sense I got from people then," said Wellman, "was that they don't want adult movie theaters or book stores, they don't want any adults-only businesses, primarily because of the kind of people it

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THANKSGIVING 1991

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Adult store near attorney general's office, not on his list.

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Activist Offers List of Things to Monitor

Council Bars Public from Waste Bid Meeting

By Patricia Dugaw

Are Mayor P.J. Morgan and the City Council at it again behind closed doors? On Thursday, 21 November, 1991, the City Council Subcommittee on Solid Waste met to discuss the current bids for the continuation of the Blue Bag Program. This meeting should have been an open meeting as defined by the Nebraska statutes on Public Meetings Section 84-1401 to 84-1414, sometimes referred to as the Open Meetings Law. Instead it was illegally closed to the public. Patricia Dugaw, an observer for the no name group, and Fred Thomas, of the Omaha World-Herald were both present to observe the meeting, when the chairperson, Fred Conley, declared that the meeting would be closed to the public because of the "nature of what is to be discussed." No vote of the subcommittee members, Steve Exon and Richard Takechi, was taken during open session and the reason stated for closure is not one of the narrowly defined reasons for closure cited in section 84-1410. The public was illegally barred from a public meeting held by the city council and attended by mayoral aide Walt Pheffer.

We are left only to wonder what "the nature" was that filled the discussion held behind those closed doors. We do know that after this meeting Mayor Morgan came out strongly supporting the high bidder, Waste Management of Nebraska. The same Waste Management which holds a contract that was illegally bid and awarded in February, 1991.

Since the City Council will be discussing and awarding the new contract after the Nebraska Observer has gone to press we can only strongly suggest that each person carefully watch the local press and video media in Omaha for further information. Remember while you read and observe that:

1. Waste Management Inc. and BFI have been convicted in other cities and states of bid rigging; a suit is pending in Kansas City. Since the City officials are seriously questioning the BFI bid, and one city council member even asked whether it was a shadow bid, be suspi-

cious that arrangements may have been made to be sure Waste Management wasn't bidding alone but would still be the bid chosen.

2. The BFI bid is lower, uses fewer human resources and will separate more types of recyclable materials than that of Waste Management. The BFI bid also assures lower, but more realistic, marketing prices for the recyclable materials sorted.

3. Waste Management is assuring higher, but unsupported marketing prices for recyclable materials. An example is newspaper sent to Weyerhaeuser deinking facilities in Oregon. At present, Waste Management receives \$25 per ton, with a promised increase of \$5, for a total of \$30 per ton. In its bid proposal it assures \$35 per ton for newspaper. Where does Waste Management propose to get the other \$5 per ton?

4. Houston, Texas had a 1-year pilot program of commingled recyclables and garbage pickup, which also used blue bags for collection. Even though this program, overseen by BFI, never included glass in the blue bags because of breakage and contamination of the other recyclables, still it was unacceptable to the city. The commingled pickup of this program has been dropped and the City of Houston has taken over recycling, using a separate pickup of the blue bags, still without glass in the bags. Does Omaha which not only

commingled recyclables but also includes glass, need to take a long, hard look and learn from other cities?

5. After a pilot program conducted by greater Des Moines, the agency overseeing recycling and waste reduction for the area decided to establish drop-off sites as the most cost effective method of recycling collection. While the tonnage of recyclables was slightly less than curbside collection, the cost per ton was less. Public Works officials in Omaha are saying just the opposite. Ask them for documentation to back their position.

6. Each week, the public works department tells us the number of participating households increases. The latest is 50 percent. Where are these households and where are their recyclables? There is little or no increase of weight in recyclable materials reported in the Weekly Blue Bag Report prepared by the Public Works Dept. Should there be if the participation rate increases?

7. The high cost of recycling and the possibility of a garbage fee being assessed has been discussed by the Public Works Dept. Right now the true cost is buried in the General Fund and not readily apparent or available. Do not let the City Council pass a garbage fee without first showing you the real costs, and without guarantees that the fees collected would be used only to offset the cost

of waste handling and not just added to the General Fund to pay other City expenses.

Be sure to watch announcements for the public hearing before the City Council. The City Council meets each Tuesday starting at 2:00 p.m. in the Legislative chambers, second floor of the City/County Civic Building, 1819 Farnam Street. You can call 444-5520 each Monday in December and ask if the public hearing for the Omaha Effort/Blue Bag Recycling Contract is on the agenda for the week's Council meeting. This public hearing will be your only chance to tell the City Council what you think of its Blue Bag Program and its dealings with convicted felons.

You deserve to have the City stop treating your recyclables like garbage, and to tell you the true cost of waste handling.

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U.S. Public Misled About Canadian Cardiac Care

by Michael M. Rachlis, M.D., M.Sc.,
FRCPC, Toronto, Ontario

Reprinted from *Physicians for a National Health Program Newsletter*

The Public Broadcasting System broadcast "Borderline Medicine" in February 1991. The program serves as an example of how an honest attempt to bring clear information to the American public about Canada's health care system has instead inadvertently misled Americans and their decision makers.

"Borderline Medicine" compares health services in the two countries for expectant mothers, heart patients, and cancer patients. The producers went to great lengths to identify similar patients in both countries and then followed their care. A production team spent a half day in the Vancouver General Hospital's cardiac catheterization laboratory with Dr. Victor Huckle, a staff cardiologist, in February 1990. Mr. Albert Mueller was one of the patients that morning.

During the film, Dr. Huckle describes Mr. Mueller as suffering from severe angina. The angiogram shows that Mr. Mueller has almost total occlusion of his left main coronary artery and significant obstruction of his right coronary artery. During the catheterization, Dr. Huckle advises Mr. Mueller that his condition is serious and that he should have urgent surgery. However, he also advises Mr. Mueller that he might have to wait months for his operation.

Later the producers spend a half day in Detroit Harper Hospital's cardiac catheterization laboratory. The American doctors were perplexed that a Canadian with such a high-risk condition as Mr. Mueller's could wait months for his operation.

The documentary follows Mr. Mueller for five months and finds him still waiting for surgery five months later. The audience is left with the impression that many Canadians must be dying because of lack of facilities for acute interventional therapies for heart disease. It has left the lasting impression that a Canadian-style health care system would be unpalatable to voters. Furthermore, as most members of Congress are middle-aged men, the story of a middle-aged man waiting months for this potentially life-saving surgery has particular meaning for them.

Immediate Surgery Offered

Unfortunately, this impression is false and the facts of Mr. Mueller's case were not as reported. According to both Mr. Mueller and Dr. Huckle, Mr. Mueller could have had his operation within two to three weeks of his angiogram, if he had so desired. According to both the patient and Dr. Huckle, Mr. Mueller saw a cardiac surgeon within one to two weeks of his angiogram and he was offered immediate surgery. However, Mr. Mueller says that he felt so much improved with the medication which had been prescribed after his angiogram that he declined surgery. He then spent a pleasant spring and summer driving through

the western United States and Canada.

Both Mr. Mueller and Dr. Huckle recall being contacted at least twice by Mr. Jeff Libman (an associate producer of "Borderline Medicine") after the February angiogram. They recall Mr. Libman asking if Mr. Mueller had had his surgery and they both claim to have replied negatively without being asked further questions. Mr. Libman also talked to senior civil servants within the British Columbia Ministry of Health and the British Columbia Royal Commission on Health Services and Costs. Unfortunately none of these officials suspected that Mr. Mueller might have canceled his own operation. Mr. Libman and the American Public were left with the impression that Mr. Mueller desperately needed surgery and there weren't enough resources to do his operation within a safe waiting period.

...as most members of Congress are middle-aged men, the story of a middle-aged man waiting months for this potentially life-saving surgery has particular meaning for them.

Mr. Mueller's first language is not English and it is quite possible that he did not know the relevance of Mr. Libman's questions. However, it is puzzling why Dr. Huckle didn't clarify the matter for Mr. Libman. He knew that "Borderline Medicine" was assessing the resources for cardiac care in Canada. He knew that his answers would lead the producers to believe that there were severe constraints on resources for such care. He knew that Mr. Mueller could have had his surgery within two weeks but had declined surgery himself. Furthermore, Dr. Huckle sent a letter of congratulations to the Producer of "Borderline Medicine" after it was broadcast and the letter did not mention the misleading nature of the cardiac care segment.

The Rhetoric of Underfunding

Dr. Charles Wright, Vice President, Medicine at the Vancouver General Hospital, says that at best Dr. Huckle's behaviour was highly inappropriate and at worst an attempt to manipulate the situation to gain more resources for his specialty.

This behaviour might be classified as "orchestrated outrage." Professor Robert Evans of the University of British Columbia suggested this term for the process by which physicians attempt to convince the rest of the population to cut a larger slice of the eco-

Why the Observer Isn't Promoting "A Call For a National Health Plan" of Nebraskans for Peace

Democratic presidential candidates and groups all over the country have begun to make national health care their issue. Sen. Bob Kerrey's Health USA was an important contribution among the proposals coming from leaders in Congress; it provided a mechanism that assured access to health care independent of a person's employment.

In Nebraska, Nebraskans for Peace has begun a campaign to rally support for the cause, and the League of Women Voters is circulating a questionnaire from which they will determine a group position on health care.

The Nebraska Observer has long advocated the health care plan promoted by Physicians for a National Health Program, which is modeled on the Canadian plan. This plan goes farther than the principles articulated by Nebraskans for Peace and the proposal of Sen. Kerrey; while allowing patients to choose their doctor, it mandates a single payer, the federal government. By eliminating the bureaucracies of the present 1500 competing insurance com-

panies, the single-payer approach would cut administrative costs and enforce cost-containment in a way not possible with the present structure. In the United States, we spend 23 percent of our health care budget on administration; in Canada the cost is nine percent.

Although the Observer congratulates all who contribute to this movement, we are disappointed that the position taken by Nebraskans for Peace has gone only as far as Sen. Kerrey's plan. Kerrey has bent over backward to assure those in the insurance industry that their sacred cow would not be violated. He needs to hear that there is support -- even a demand -- for a new way of looking at the problem. Had the Nebraskans for Peace done what clearly needs to be done in this state, they would have gotten out ahead of Kerrey on this one instead of taking a position tantamount to a Kerrey cheering squad.

This is not to say that people shouldn't support NFP's campaign, sign their petitions, contribute to their ad, etc. But at the Observer we plan to keep calling attention to the need for a Canadian style plan, and we

nomie pie for health care services.

"The rhetoric of underfunding, shortages, excessive waiting lists, and so on is an important part of the process by which providers negotiate their share of public resource • including their own incomes."

According to data from the Vancouver General Hospital for the period February to April 1990 almost one-half of all non-emergency cardiac surgery cases were performed within one week of their being booked. Emergency cases are completed within hours or a few days of being booked. These objective data should be contrasted with Dr. Huckle's statements in "Borderline Medicine."

"The waiting time for elective surgery can be more than a year. The waiting time for urgent surgery can be up to several months and the waiting time for emergency surgery, depending on what other emergencies are waiting, can be up to several weeks time."

The United States General Accounting Office report, *Canadian Health Insurance: Lessons for the United States*, found similar evidence on waiting times. The GAO surveyed directors of ten Ontario Cardiovascular surgery programs and found that none reported waits for emergency surgery. Three of ten reported no waits for urgent surgery (reported waiting times for other programs varied from one to 30 days). One of ten reported

no waits for elective surgery (reported waiting times for other programs varied from seven to 180 days).

Open Heart Surgery

There is no doubt that Canada's rate of open heart surgery is less than the United States'. There is no question that some elective patients of popular surgeons at certain facilities can wait months for care. However, Americans should not believe that scarce resources result in heart patients with emergent or urgent conditions waiting undue periods.

There is another reason why it may appear that heart patients wait unduly for their operations. According to Dr. Dennis Psutka, former Assistant Deputy Minister with the Ontario Ministry of Health and present chair of the Southwest Ontario Cardiovascular Care Committee, waiting lists have become places to "hide" inoperable patients. Dr. Psutka says that patients who are not operable are sometimes placed on waiting lists to give them some hope. However, according to Dr. Psutka, they are never given surgery and it may appear that they wait long periods of time.

There is also little truth to the stories of large numbers of Canadians crossing the bor-

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National Activists: Omaha Cox' Barriers 'Unheard Of'



by Warrior Richardson

The idea of Public Access is a very attractive and democratic one. Just think about how many hours people spend sitting in front of their tv's, especially children. Have you ever watched a child watching tv? He is mesmerized. He is totally focused on the television tube and has completely tuned everything else out. He looks as if he is hypnotized. Now think about what comes on television: sex, violence, idiotic sitcoms, and many political and religious points of views that I personally find objectionable. However, in a democratic society divergent points of views are to be allowed. Therein lies the reason for Public Access tv. If only the rich could afford to produce tv shows then only their voices would be heard. This, of course, is undemocratic. Consequently, Public Access tv was created to provide equipment and training at little or no cost. That is the idea, but what is the reality?

The reality is quite another story. So many restrictions are imposed on the users of Cox Cable's Public Access facilities that many people, maybe most, throw their hands up and give up. It is simply not worth their time to jump through all the hoops and over all the hurdles placed in their way.

As a member of the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers (NFLCP) I am in frequent contact with persons in the national office. When I tell them about the restrictions imposed on us Public Access users here in Omaha, they find them so outlandish that they laugh out loud. They are in contact with Public Access users across the country and

these members are confounded by the fact that Cox Cable is actually able to get away with this.

In the last Cox Watch I discussed many of the obstacles I faced in attempting to use the Public Access facilities. I ran into a new obstacle when I was told that editing of tv shows with Public Access equipment is only allowed during normal working hours, which effectively excludes normal working people from the use of this equipment.

Potential users of Public Access editing facilities must attend one of their editing workshops. But when I did take off work to attend a daytime editing workshop they never completed it. I was told there was not enough time. This makes the second workshop I attempted to take that was never completed.

Cox Cable likes to maintain these obstacles and at the same time maintain that these obstacles do not exist. For example, in Cox Cable's Public Access handbook it is written that, "Public Access is 'Do it Yourself Television'," and, "most importantly, Public Access is free!" Yet in its policy statement concerning the use of its mobile van by Public Access users it states, "The charge for technical/engineering support will be \$1,150 per day." Did I miss something? Can these statements be true simultaneously? I am perplexed. I called up the national office of the NFLCP to see if this were a national phenomenon or if this only happens in Omaha. I had to wait for the laughter on the other end of the line to cease before I was told how unheard of this is.

Also, there is a matter that has been dragging on since before September. Cox Cable published a Public Access handbook that disallows Public Access users from copying from 3/4" videotape onto 1/2" tape and vice versa. Michael Kohler, Communications Manager for Cox Cable stated in a letter to me,

"Attaching a VCR to existing equipment at the hub sites: If it was simply a matter of installing a standard VCR at the site, Cox would, as you suggest, be able to provide such at a minimal cost. However, in order to make use of the VCR in the manner you describe, a time base corrector (with a cost in the thousands of dollars) would have to be installed as well. Nevertheless, this is a matter that will not be completely dismissed. We will be happy to consider the potential viability for a future budget period."

Cox seems to be intentionally making things harder than they need be: I and my crew already successfully copied between the different formats (it is a simple matter of plugging both ends of two cables into sockets specially made for them). Furthermore, the Public Access studio already has a time base corrector. I discovered the time base corrector after showing Mr. Kohler's letter to a friend who said, "Cox already has a time base corrector. There it is right there. You see that piece of equipment with time base corrector

written on it. That's it."

If "in order to make use of the VCR in the manner [I] describe, a time base corrector (with a cost in the thousands of dollars) would have to be installed" and a time base corrector has been installed long before Mr. Kohler ever wrote this letter or before the Public Access handbook was ever published and we have already successfully completed this process until told to cease, why are we not allowed to execute this simple and extremely useful procedure? Doesn't Cox want quality programming?

I'll close with a recent nightmare. I tried to finish a show that I had already spent 16 hours on, but their tape deck destroyed my

tape. It took 16 production hours, plus time from others who helped me do the research, to produce the shows on that tape, but only about two seconds to destroy them. Howard Swain, the Public Access Coordinator, in his typical gloating manner, blamed it on my tape and told me not to use it again. So, even if I can salvage parts of the tape I am not allowed to use it.

National Federation of Local Cable Programmers

Plans are being made and action is being initiated to deal with these and other problems that will undoubtedly arise. For more information come to the next NFLCP meeting to be held December 28, 12:00 noon at the W. Dale Clark Library, 215 South 15th Street or call me at (402) 457-5026.

Remember When Cox Promised to Offer SCOLA? They Were Only Joking

by Frances Mendenhall

A story in the August Observer discussed a satellite broadcast network called SCOLA, Satellite Communications for Learning. It is the brainchild of Jesuit Lee Lubbers of Creighton. SCOLA offers news live or day of broadcast from thirty countries in twenty languages.

SCOLA, the article pointed out, was a bargain, available to Cox Cable for about \$6,000 a year. There was unused and underutilized channel assignments. It seemed that Cox should add SCOLA to its selection. Before the article went to press, Cox executive Mike Kohler promised exactly that. It would happen very soon, he said. All that stood in the way were some technical problems.

Kohler had said the same kind of thing

back in March. The Observer had already heard such promises before. Still, he seemed sincere.

Nothing happened. Two months ago I called Kohler back. He again promised to get SCOLA. He said he needed to work something out with others who had unused cable channel time. He expected to be able to do that soon. After that we could expect to see SCOLA on Channel 4, when the Health and Wellness Consortium wasn't broadcasting.

Presently, there seems to be no movement at all on this plan. A spokesperson in the SCOLA said their group had not been contacted recently. Kohler did not return my calls.

We are still keeping an eye on events here. Will report as any information becomes available.

Correction

Frances Mendenhall

The editor screwed up last issue. In the last "Cox Watch" column, the column closed with this observation: "...Cox has imposed so many hurdles it is actually suppressing Public Access; it then has the audacity to argue that because of low demand, Public Access should be eliminated. With friends like this who needs enemies?" We apologize to Cox: they have never argued that Public Access should be eliminated, at least not openly. We just suspect that that is their intention from their treatment of users like Mr. Richardson, and we inadvertently changed some of his meaning in the editing.

Interested in Women's Rights or Sexual Harassment?

**City of Omaha
Personnel Board Meeting
City Hall, 1819 Farnam,
Legislative Chambers
Thursday, December 5
9:00 a.m. until ?**

The case involves the termination of a fire captain for harassment of a female fire fighter.

Please come to observe the system and see that it works in Omaha, Nebraska

After Failing to Get Their Bill Passed

US Ecology Tries Lobbying in California

Nick Alexander

SAN FRANCISCO—A statewide environmentalist campaign has wounded a proposal to put a nuclear disposal site in the Mojave Desert.

If the dump is blocked — which could come before the end of the year if key permits are denied — it would signal the probable collapse of a federal attempt to force all the states into a national system for storing "low-level" waste.

The California Legislature withdrew a bill in September that would have cleared the way for the dump, to be built in Ward Valley, on the Arizona border about 270 miles east of Los Angeles. USEcology, the company that would run the dump, had persuaded Republican state Sen. Marian Bergeson to attach the proposal to a bill establishing a state toxics commission.

Since then the company has undertaken a lobbying campaign to get the governor to get the dump approved through some sort of executive action. A memo leaked to California Assemblyman Tom Hayden, describes a plan to lobby the California's Governor Pete Wilson and also acknowledges that there is controversy in the plan to build the dump. The memo was from Winner/Wagner and Asst., a Los Angeles public relations firm, done at request of California Radioactive Materials Management Forum, a consortium of waste producers.

The lobbying strategy is to keep US Ecology invisible. They want to have others — doctors, people in radiopharmaceutical companies, Jonas Salk — lobby elected officials and visit editorial boards and make it appear that there is widespread support for the dump. They also want employees of utilities and nuclear facilities to send letters to the governor.

US Ecology has also hired Craig Fuller, former chief of staff for Bush, to lobby the governor.

Although such strategies have worked well in places like Nebraska, it is by no means a foregone conclusion that Wilson will be persuaded. The memo itself implies that Wilson is not in industry's pocket. Furthermore, there is strong political pressure from the State Lands Commission for him not to sign an executive order,

especially from two of the three commissioners, Leo McCarthy and Gray Davis. If he did there could be lawsuits about his going around the process, or a suit on constitutionality.

Present Three Dumps Good Only Through Next Year

The three states that currently store all of the "low-level" radioactive waste produced in the country — South Carolina, Nevada and Washington — can begin refusing waste from other states in 1993. By 1996, each waste-producing state must have active dump sites

or join a compact with a state that does.

California activists are worried that other states' dumps will be delayed indefinitely, leaving California, host state for the Southwest Compact — Arizona, North Dakota and South Dakota — as the nation's dumping ground. Federal legislation empowers the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to force a state to take waste from outside its compact or from the military under "emergency access provisions."

"There are three patsies now stuck with all the radioactive waste," says Diane D'Arrigo, an analyst for the Washington-based Nuclear Information and Resource Service. "Under this system, we'll get two or three more, and then the incentive for new sites will be decreased."

The plans have drawn nationwide opposition. New York, Texas and Michigan are suing to prevent construction of regional sites. Protests against proposed dumps also sprang up in Illinois, North Carolina and Massachusetts.

Sen. Christopher Dodd (D-CT) is asking for a GAO study on the Low-level Waste Policy Act of 1980, looking at liability and environmental considerations, and the problem of the deadline which now seems impossible to meet because of delays that virtually every project has encountered.

In Nebraska, which like California had picked a disposal site, the issue helped defeat Gov. Kay Orr in last year's election. This year, Ray Peery, the executive director of its five-state compact commission was convicted of embezzlement from his agency.

And here in July, three simultaneous hearings on licensing Ward Valley drew over 1,000 activists from more than 100 anti-nuke and environmental organizations.

Meanwhile the city of Needles is asking for a grand jury investigation of US Ecology.

Toxic Disaster Looms

"California is the only state that's even close to building one of these," says Hugh Kaufman, a top official in the Environmental Protection Agency's hazardous site control division. "Stopping them would force Congress to open the Pandora's box of nuclear waste disposal again."

The dump's opponents include two possible Democratic senatorial candidates, Lt. Gov. Leo McCarthy and State Controller Gray Davis. Both sit on the three-member State Lands Commission, which could prevent the state Department of Health Services from taking title to 1,000 acres of federal land in Ward Valley to use for the dump.

Davis warns that California faces a "toxic financial disaster." He says he would support the project if the generators of the waste or US Ecology were held liable "in perpetuity" for future damages and cleanup costs.

State health officials are trying to put a good face on nuclear waste with the question-

able assertion that 80 percent of the Southwest's share of it, measured by radioactivity, comes from short-lived isotopes produced by the medical industry. But Department of Energy figures show that 53 percent of California's waste — and 81 percent of the nation's — comes from nuclear power plants. (Editor's note: although the industry campaigned hard to convince Nebraska voters in 1988 that research and nuclear medicine needed and wanted the dump in Nebraska, last year it was disclosed that Nebraska's waste stream does not contain any medical waste.)

"The term 'low-level' is one of the biggest public relations coups the nuclear industry has ever made," says Roger Herried of the Abalone Alliance. The classification includes low concentrations of plutonium, tritium, strontium 90 and nickel 59 — isotopes that emit life-threatening radioactivity for up to thousands of years.

The case against the dump gains credibility from the poor performance of US Ecology's other facilities. Its low level dumps in Maxey Flats, KY and Sheffield, IL were both closed in the late 1970s because they leaked. Maxey Flats still costs Kentucky taxpayers over \$1 million a year, and cleaning up Sheffield may cost over \$100 million.

"The risk to the nuclear industry is that the liability may shift back to them (away) from the taxpayers," says Kaufman.

The company commissioned a hydrology survey that said the dump would be safe because Ward Valley, in spite of frequent flash

floods, is "essentially a closed system." The survey, produced by Bechtel Corp., concluded that a torrent of contaminated water could not flood the nearby Colorado River, which supplies drinking and irrigation water to Southern California, Arizona and northwestern Mexico.

Circle of Poison

But local Native Americans whose ancestors have known the area for centuries dispute this. "Many underground springs come through the mountains from [Ward Valley] to the [river;] it is not a closed system," says Llewellyn Barrackman, vice chair of the Fort Mojave Tribe.

Even the Environmental Protection Agency criticized the survey for not considering how groundwater could leach radionuclides through fractures in desert rock into the aquifer underlying the site. Dump opponents say the best available technology for waste "disposal" is above-ground storage at the point of generation — easily monitored, much cheaper and far safer than shipping waste to the proposed unlined pit.

"You couldn't even build a municipal landfill the way they are talking about building this facility," exclaims Bob Fredenberg, consultant to the state Senate Toxics and Public Safety Management Committee.

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DeCamp: Board's Reversal of Decision to Free Bonacci Not Fundamentally Fair

Following is attorney John DeCamp's request for a rehearing by the Parole Board on their decision not to allow Paul Bonacci to go free. Although the request was denied, we are printing it because it contains important information about what happened.

by John DeCamp

To the Nebraska Parole Board:

Please consider this a formal, legal motion for a re-hearing on your recent decision, 31 Oct., 1991, to not parole Paul Bonacci except to an "in treatment" mental health patient program. In other words, involuntary mental health commitment.

This motion is based on our belief that due process and fundamental rules of constitutional fairness were violated by the parole board in its handling of the Paul Bonacci matter, all to Bonacci's detriment.

We believe Due Process & Fundamental Constitutional Fairness were violated in the following respects:

The Parole board held a hearing, took evidence, had executive session and reached a unanimous decision, 21 Oct., 1991, to parole Paul Bonacci to a program as outlined at the Parole Hearing which involved Paul Bonacci living with Reverend Morrow & voluntarily receiving counseling from a psychiatrist identified as Dr. Beverley Mead. This was duly reported by the press and every individual -- press and private individual -- at the hearing had no doubt as to what occurred and what was determined.

Immediately thereafter the Omaha World-Herald Newspaper launched an all-out attack on the Parole Board and the above discretionary decision reached by the Parole Board following rules of due process. Paul Bonacci

has civil suits pending against two prominent individuals associated with the World-Herald, Former Publisher Harold Andersen and former Entertainment editor Peter Citron, and the World-Herald itself, claiming they violated his civil rights by causing him to be a victim of repeated and horrible child abuse as a youth.

On 31 Oct., 1991, The Parole Board arbitrarily and without any formal hearing or opportunity for Bonacci to present any evidence rebutting the so called "facts" and claims of the World-Herald -- and itself under fire for its "Fort" decision -- reversed their original 21 Oct., 1991 decision mentioned above, and arbitrarily and capriciously made "parole" conditional upon Bonacci involuntarily committing himself to a mental health institution. No legitimate facts were available to support such decision and no authority exists on the part of the Parole Board to involuntarily "commit" individuals to a mental institution either directly by ordering it or indirectly by holding them hostage thru the "parole" process.

Sunday, November 3, 1991, the Omaha World-Herald Newspaper in its editorial column acknowledged that indeed the "press" had influenced the Parole Board to reverse its 21 Oct., 1991, decision via pressure from the newspaper itself, all without public hearing or opportunity to rebut the so called "evidence" presented by the "press" (World-Herald). And the World Herald, inappropriately via its editorial, blatantly attempted to "reward" or "pay off" the Parole Board for its reversal by giving "kudos" to the Parole Board for its actions.

Based on the above set of facts, we would

Next page

Parole Decision Reversed; Parole Board Under Gun

When the Observer went to press last month, we believed as did many others that parole was immanent for Paul Bonacci, who now has eleven months left to serve on a three count conviction of child sexual assault. Just after our paper went to press, however, the Parole Board, in a surprise decision, reversed their earlier conditional vote to grant parole; they then required that while on parole, Bonacci must be confined to a mental institution with a treatment program for sexual deviants, terms that were unacceptable to Bonacci. DeCamp asked for a rehearing, but the Parole Board has denied it; because parole was not denied there are no grounds for a rehearing. Since they have refused a rehearing DeCamp's office says he can ap-

peal to district court.

The reversal itself is to be reviewed in sixty days, so the Parole Board will be doing that some time in December.

Meanwhile, the Observer has made several attempts to contact members of the Parole Board for comments on their reversal of the decision to free Bonacci. After several attempts, we were told that they are not talking to the press.

Three members of the Parole Board have recently come under fire from Governor Nelson for their decision to parole a man who was accused of murder in August. On December 11 a hearing on the matter has been scheduled by the governor's office. At issue is whether the governor has the right to demand resignations from the three.

Bail Bond Granted to Alisha Owen, Parole Possible Soon

by Rita Hamilton

In a move that surprised her family and attorney, Alisha Owen was granted an appeal bond and her sentence for the eight counts of perjury suspended November 21. The ruling came from Judge Raymond Case, who presided at her May-through-June perjury trial. Owen is serving the last few weeks of a three-



Alisha and Amanda Owen

year sentence for bad checks. She is now eligible for parole for the remaining sentence on the bad checks, which her attorney believes is possible soon. Should she fail to get parole, the bond decision makes her eligible for release from February 13, when her bad check sentence will be served, until her appeal of her perjury conviction is heard, expected to be some time next summer. A spokesperson in her attorney John DeCamp's office expressed surprise at the decision, and predicted that prosecutor Gerald Moran would appeal the bond decision. Moran told the Observer he had no plans to make such an appeal.

Because of the judge's previously unfriendly tone in gestures such as castigating Owen when the verdict was delivered, and his determination of her sentence, potentially fifteen years, the same as Larry King's, it was not expected that he would exercise his discretionary authority in her favor. Owen was also denied permission to be present at the hearing, which was seen as a sign that it would not go in her favor. When attorney John DeCamp walked into the courtroom he told supporters he expected no bail.

There was no reason to expect a decision favorable to Owen during the court proceedings that followed. Prosecuting attorney Gerald Moran made the case that Owen was a risk to

try to escape and that he opposed her release. Although Owen's attorney believed that testimony from Larry Wayne, the warden of the prison where Owen is now serving, should be sought, the judge rejected that plan.

After both sides had made their arguments, the judge told the court he would rule later. The Prosecutor Moran left the room.

Then Donna Owen, mother of the defendant, asked the judge for permission for her and her husband to speak. After some reluctance, the judge agreed, but required that the court reporter stay and keep it on the record.

Donna Owen disputed Moran's description of Alisha's previous history with the police, saying that she had not avoided being turned in in 1990.

Judge Case commented that all of this could have been avoided had Alisha simply pleaded the fifth in front of the grand jury. Mrs. Owen replied, "We wish she had."

The Owens made an emotional appeal to Judge Case in behalf of both their daughter and granddaughter. The senior Owens are raising Alisha's daughter, who, she testified in the perjury trial last summer, was fathered by former police chief Robert Wadman. Al Owen, near tears and with cracking voice, said, "I have my six-year-old granddaughter living with me, your honor. We get on our knees every night together and pray for her mommy to come home. And she asked my why can't my mommy come home. What do you say to her? What would you say to her?"

Case was visibly unnerved. Donna Owen interrupted and said she appreciated that the judge would listen to them. The judge said, "You people don't have to thank me, that's why I'm here."

The judge made his decision sometime that afternoon. Owen's sentence would be suspended and the bond would be granted. He filed the papers, but the family and the attorneys did not find out until the next day.

Judge Case insisted in a conversation with the Observer that his decision was not unusual, nor influenced by the the emotional appeal of Al and Donna Owen.

Here are the terms of the decision. A \$50,000 appeal bond would be posted. This appeal bond does not have the usual 10 percent provision and must be posted in the form of cash or corporate surety bond. She must live with her parents and attend school or work on a full-time basis and she must be home by 10:30 p.m. each night unless accompanied by one or both of her parents.

Appeal Possible; Retrial Not Ruled Out

Owen's conviction on eight counts of per-

Owen Bond a Surprise to Supporters

Continued from previous page

jury is under appeal, which will be tried by the newly established appellate court, possibly some time next summer. Her attorney, John DeCamp, is also seeking a retrial from the state Supreme Court.

DeCamp's work on behalf of Owen has been limited by the fact that

her previous attorney Henry Rosenthal has not given him any of the documents or records related to the case. In the November 21 hearing, DeCamp, responding to the judge's question as to whether DeCamp had access to the presentence investigation, replied that Rosenthal refused to deliver any of the trial-related records according to a court order from Judge Case's court. Neither Judge Case nor Prosecutor Moran commented in the courtroom or disputed DeCamp's statement about his being denied the documents from Owen's trial as a result of a court order.

Judge Case later told the Observer that there was no such court order from his court. As far as the records of Owen's trial are concerned, "he [DeCamp] should have them. If he's going to do the appeal work he'd have to have them." When the Observer tried to contact Henry Rosenthal to ask why the documents had not been turned over to DeCamp, we were told he was out of town.

DeCamp's Appeal

Continued from previous page

request the following:

That the Parole Board order a new hearing for Paul Bonacci as soon as reasonably possible at which time they would take evidence and hear witnesses who would present facts to document the following:

A. To establish that Paul Bonacci is not now nor was he ever a mentally disordered sex offender; sex deviate, requiring involuntary mental health commitment as was attempted by the Parole Board;

B. To establish that Paul Bonacci, more than any other prisoner currently in the entire Nebraska Penal System, has complied with the standards to be granted parole, has served far more time than any individual in a comparable situation as Paul Bonacci's and, if immediate parole is not granted, will end up being the only person ever required by the Parole Board to serve his total sentence despite his having a perfect record during his incarceration.

C. To establish in detail the nature of Paul Bonacci's Multiple Personality Disorder and any appropriate approach to dealing with this issue.

D. To answer such other questions and address such other issues as the Parole Board may require.

Porn, from page 1

attracts...But as far as people renting X-rated videos and watching them in privacy, restricting the rental to adults but renting them out of a general family rated video, they didn't have much complaint. It was twenty-to-one or even thirty-to-one."

That pretty much describes the situation of the seven rental stores in Sarpy County, and in Wellman's mind, accounts for why there had been no complaints for ten years.

What Is the Community Standard?

Pornography is defined by the content of the film or book, and how that content fits or does not fit the community standard.

In a 1989 case before the U.S. District Court (United States of America vs. M-K Enterprises, Inc., and Lynn Sparks) Judge Warren Urbom defined contemporary community standards for southeast Nebraska.

I have considered the tape as a whole according to my understanding of the contemporary community standards of the average person in southeast Nebraska. "The Event" is a simple film. It is unbridled sex, the eager, unabashed, no-holds-barred doing of raw sex -- oral, manual, vaginal, anal, heterosexual and homosexual -- in multiple positions and in wearisome repetition. It is a crude expression of a primitive passion, exaggerated by patently offensive full-screen close-ups of the sex parts in action. That is what it is, nothing more and nothing less.

There is no force, no deliberate pain, no inanimate insertions, no bondage, no involve-

ment of children or animals and no deception.

If a video tape, to be legally obscene, must be designed to be attractive to an urge for a darker side of sex -- the morbid, sick, unhealthy, unwholesome side -- as I think it must, then I have a reasonable doubt that this one is.

Wellman says that Sarpy County people would consider violence and rape scenes unacceptable, and would never tolerate depicting sex with children. He does not believe that such material is being offered, but rather, portrayals of repeated and varied sex acts.

Kohls says he believes that the films also portray violence and sadomasochism, but no child porn, judging from their titles and cover descriptions.

According to Kohls, he and another member went to the stores to get an idea of what was there. Three of their members viewed three videos from beginning to end and wrote an affidavit. They held four meetings and allowed people to view the first two minutes of the films. Then they wrote about 40 letters to Wellman. But the letters were from people all over Omaha. "I ignore all letters from outside the county," said Wellman. "Local community standards could include Bellevue, Papillion, Capehart, or LaVista." Wellman refused to prosecute.

Attorney General Responds

In April, 1991, the group approached Attorney General Don Stenberg's office. Deputy Attorney General Sam Grimminger told the Observer he contacted Wellman by letter to encourage him to control the sale of obscene material in Sarpy County, and later met with him. Wellman refused to take action. "We were concerned that Mr. Wellman had stated publicly that he was not going to take any action against the video shops. Whenever a prosecutor announces that he is not going to enforce certain laws it serves as a red flag to the lawbreakers," said Grimminger.

Grimminger wrote letters to the seven video stores in late October. The letter put the store owners on notice that if they continued to sell or rent the videos they would be subject to legal action. No specific films were named, although according to Kohls, their group supplied the attorney general's office with a list of 800 such titles, and no indication that a particular store had rented a particular movie. It

was the first time the owners knew there was a problem. One attorney, in a letter the next day to the attorney general's office on behalf of one of the stores, called Grimminger's letter a "wholesale condemnation," and "the most blatant form of prior restraint."

Moreover, the letter based its definition of obscenity on a 1983 Nebraska Supreme Court case, State vs. Embassy Corp., rather than on the more standard 1973 U.S. Supreme Court case which used community standards as the ultimate measure. According to the case cited in the letter, "films which have little plot, and which consist of scene after scene of sexual intercourse, lesbianism, homosexuality, cunnilingus, and fellatio are obscene."

The next day, the Attorney General Stenberg appeared on an Omaha television station announcing his plan to prosecute Sarpy County's video stores.

How did the attorney general's office come to the conclusion that the material was obscene? Grimminger told the Observer that he had seen a portion of one of the movies, Deep Throat III, and had read reports of others from Omaha for Decency who had watched the entire film and two others. When asked whether he believed that he could get a conviction, he said, "We believe that it's obscene material."

Mike Wellman does not believe that a conviction is even remotely possible. "If I thought it even approached fifty-fifty, I'd go ahead and prosecute, but I just don't get that impression," he told the Observer. Wellman cited similar attempts at prosecution in neighboring communities in the last couple of years. According to him, one attempt in Sioux City has failed, and three out of four in Council Bluffs.

Grimminger insists he is serious about prosecuting because only a decision by a jury can translate community standard into enforceable law.

Omaha for Decency would like the determination of community standard to be based on a raised awareness of the content of the films. Don Kohls also understands that to fail the Supreme Court's test, a film must also be "patently offensive," and must "lack serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value." Still, they believe that a jury rule in their favor. "The whole issue," said Kohls, "is what is legal and what is not."

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Court Allows Nebraska to Restrict Farmland Ownership To Families

by Marty Strange

On the first day of its current session, the U.S. Supreme Court decided not to hear an appeal of a lower court decision upholding Nebraska's constitutional ban on corporate farming. In doing so, the court accepted the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals' verdict that "the people of Nebraska have made a reasonable judgment that prohibiting non-family corporate farming serves the public interest in preserving an agriculture where families own and farm the land."

The case involved MSM Farms, Inc., a corporation set up just to present the stiffest legal challenge to I-300, Nebraska's Family Farm Amendment. It consisted of only two shareholders, Gerald Schleich and Paul Meyer, who claimed that because they are unrelated, they are discriminated against by I-300 which permits only corporations with a majority of the stock owned by members of a family. MSM Farms bought 10 acres near Columbus, NE to provoke a court test of I-300.

Friends of the Constitution, a net-

work of rural, urban, and church organizations, provided key legal support for two farmers, Everett Holstein of Blair and Richard Bartek of Ithaca, who intervened in the case to defend I-300. The appeals court relied heavily on the arguments had by Holstein and Bartek's lawyer, Bob Broom of Omaha.

Broom pointed out that I-300 requires not only that the controlling owners of a corporate farm be related, but that they are "intimately involved in the operation of the farm."

The Supreme Court decision closes the book on a major court battle over corporate farming in Nebraska, and provides support for corporate farming laws in eight other states.

I-300 at Work

Progress Pig, Inc. has backed down from Initiative 300, Nebraska's constitutional amendment prohibiting corporate farming, by transferring land it acquired in Johnson County to its principal shareholder, David L. Zahn, and his wife. Whether they plan to

build a hog confinement unit as individuals is not yet clear.

Apparently, Progress Pig's owners knew the company could not qualify as a family farm corporation because none of the Zahn family planned to provide "day-to-day labor and management" on the Johnson County operation.

Meantime, Progress Pig's operation in Otoe County apparently qualifies as a family farm corporation, according to County Attorney Max Kelch. He wrote the Center to say that Zahn performs "duties" at the facility on a day-to-day basis. Whether day-to-day "duties" is the same as "day-to-day labor and management" isn't clear. We're following up and we'll keep you posted.

-- Center for Rural Affairs Newsletter

Canadian Cardiac Care

Continued from page 3

der to get heart surgery. The GAO has reported this finding as well as the Pepper Commission. In Ontario during the 1980s, approximately 200 patients sought heart surgery in the U.S. out of about 5000 to 6000 cases per year. In early 1990, doctors in Windsor (across the border from Detroit) started referring their patients to Detroit hospitals. In fiscal 1990-91, approximately 350 Ontario residents received heart surgery in the U.S. This was less than 5 percent of the 7650 cases. Many of these cases represented Ontario residents who became sick while travelling in the U.S., not Ontario residents who chose to go to the U.S. for their surgery. In fact, Prime Minister Mulroney's mother became sick in Florida this winter and had urgent surgery there.

Occidental Unloads IBP Stock

By Jeff Kirkpatrick

Lincoln Star -- Occidental Petroleum has sold its majority 51 percent interest in the Nebraska-based Iowa Beef Processors. The shares were sold to a pair of investment banking companies who then tries to resell the stock to Occidental shareholders and institutional stock investors. But, with IBP about to record its first annual loss, interest in the stock has been limited. IBP stock is now traded at about half the price it was last February, when buyout rumors were at their peak.

The firm has 26,000 employees with packing plants in Nebraska at

Dakota City, Madison, West Point, and Lexington. A 1988 study, done before the huge Lexington plan was completed, showed IBP slaughtered 29 percent of fed cattle.

Current overcapacity and tight margins are causing losses throughout the packing industry. Analysts do not expect the change in ownership to affect the way the company is run. That is too bad, since a 1986 University of Wisconsin study shows that the mere presence of IBP in a meat marketing region reduces cattle prices by 44 cents a hundredweight.

Information from this article came from the Lincoln Star

Sustainable Ag Group To Meet February 19

The 1992 Annual Meeting of the Nebraska Sustainable Agriculture Society (NSAS) will be held on Saturday, February 29, at the New World Inn in Columbus, Nebraska, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wes Jackson, director of the Land Institute, will be the keynote speaker. Work-

shops on assorted topics will be led by NSAS members and others. The noon meal features foods grown by NSAS members.

For more information call 402-254-2289 or write NSAS, Box 736, Hartington, NE 68739.

"Assert your right to know; support the alternative press."

—Maggie Kuhn, Gray Panthers



CHAPTER 57

Not Deaf, Dumb or Blind

Helen Keller (1880-1968) is best known for her personal triumph over the handicaps of blindness and deafness. But she also deserves recognition as a lifelong ally of working women. Keller championed labor's cause despite the criticism of the wealthy, who sometimes would have preferred that she remained deaf, dumb and blind.

At age 17 months, Keller's sight and hearing were destroyed by an undiagnosed illness. At age seven, her family hired Anne Sullivan, a noted teacher of the blind. With Sullivan's help, Keller was able to enter Radcliffe College in 1900. After graduation she campaigned to clean up poor working conditions leading to accidents that cause blindness among workers.

Helen Keller joined the Socialist Party, and defended the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), the one organization trying to organize all workers regardless of skill, craft, sex, race or national origins. In 1913, she came to the aid of poor immigrant women taking part in an IWW strike in Little Falls, N.Y., a major center for knit goods and underwear.



Declaring to the strikers that "their cause was her cause," Keller said: "It cannot be unreasonable to demand the protection of women and little children, and an honest wage for all who give their time and energy to industrial occupations."



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Prisoner Questions New Gift Rules

by Joseph Jusino

A change in "Policy Procedure" at the Nebraska Department of

Corrections has caused concern amongst the population.

With the new policy, any packages received will be donated to charity. Only a single monetary gift, not to exceed \$50.00, will be permitted.

In the past, within guidelines, families and loved ones were allowed to send "Christmas Food Packages".

Packages could be sent by any approved visitor and/or family member, as long as a return address was given.

An individual could receive up to two (2) packages with a combined weight of fifteen pounds. Any items received that were not within the guidelines and/or anything in excess of fifteen pounds was donated to charity.

Many of the inmates have wives and children that do not have money to send. Sharing their food is all that they can afford. Many fathers would not ask for money for fear of taking away from their children's Christmas.

They say that an individuals Christmas money will not be applied toward amounts

due the Department. It will be available to purchase "food packages" from the Canteen, which is run by the Department of Correctional Services. This change seems to violate State law by "covering up" money that could be used for restitution.

If security is a problem, further restrictions could be set with regard to types of containers and food products allowable. It would be easier to notify families of these restrictions than to ask for money.

If a shortage of staff is the issue, volunteers from Christian Fellowship or another approved volunteer organization could assist. Or, temporary help, paid for out of the "inmate trust fund".

The Salvation Army and Christian Fellowship programs provide gifts for the inmates to send to their families. Why, after being allowed for so long, are our families no longer permitted to share in the spirit of Christmas and to express their love by sending a gift.

Is it possible that Harold Clarke, the Director of the Department of Correctional Services, and his staff intend to make a profit on the Canteen sales?

Though the new policy is in effect, we have not given up hope. A petition has been drawn up and is in the process of being signed. So far, 300 of the 390 inmates have added their names to the petition. We have been denied permission to place the petition in the visiting room. Are they worried that our families and loved ones would express their feelings about being able to send Christmas food packages?

While many of us were growing up, we watched movies about the Christmas spirit. Movies like: A Miracle on 42nd Street; The Christmas That Almost Wasn't; and A Christmas Carol. Is it possible that the Grinch will actually steal Christmas this year?

Editor's note: Superintendent Karen Shortridge of the Omaha Correctional Center told the Observer that there is not a limit on the amount of money a prisoner can receive as a gift, but that the "gift" designation, for which there is a \$50 limit, protects the money from being used for restitution.

Craft Store at Center Employes Nine Special Workers

by Rita Hamilton

A new shop opened November 10, 1991, at 120 Applewood Mall (bottom Level) of the Center Mall on 42nd & Center. Now, that's not, in and of itself, a newsworthy story but this is a very special shop. It takes its name, 'Strawberry Fields', from an old familiar Beatles song that was chosen because, according to Director Cathy Palmer, it is familiar and they have probably made and sold approximately 50,000 fabric strawberries over the years.

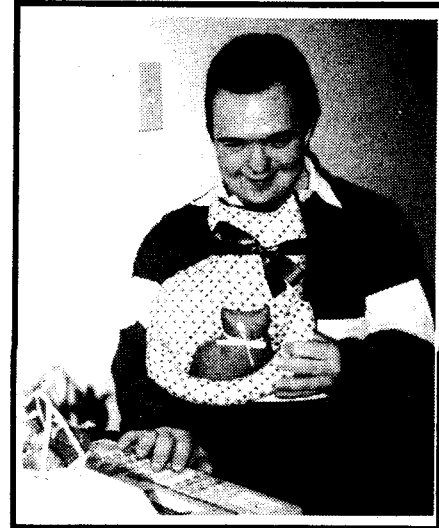
In addition to their corner on the market of handmade strawberries, Strawberry Fields, features high quality craft items from the Third World. They offer beautiful wood products from India and Kenya, doll furniture from Haiti, elegant wheatstraw cards from Bangladesh along with locally made fabric craft items at surprisingly reasonable prices. This is possible because direct marketing firms such as SERRV and SELFHELP exist for the purpose of promoting social and economic progress in developing regions of the world by purchasing

and marketing their goods in a just and direct manner. Most of their workers are volunteer. The craft makers are paid a fair wage and most profits from the crafts are given back to them.

As a non-profit corporation, Strawberry Fields does not qualify for tax credits under LB775; however, Palmer says their main purpose is to provide employment for handicapped young adults. Strawberry Fields is staffed by nine young adults with mental retardation from the Omaha area. Some work on manufacturing craft items at the shop. Others are involved in the retail operation (greeting customers, displaying crafts, running the cash register).

Palmer feels that the retail area has been historically closed to this segment of the population and is not aware of any other programs doing the job she's doing. In addition to providing retail training to an underemployed segment of the population she hopes to raise public awareness of a wasted resource.

Palmer states that she has received much praise for this project but what she really needs are more customers.



Michael Sobczyk rings up a hand-crafted made by another employee.

How to Send a Gift to a Prisoner

The following are guidelines for Christmas gifts to inmates at the Nebraska Department of Corrections:

- 1) Only a single monetary gift (not to exceed \$50.00) is allowed. Any gift packages received will be donated to charity.
- 2) Monetary gifts must be accompanied by a completed "gift certification".
- 3) The monetary gift MUST be a money order, bank draft or cashier's check.
- 4) The gift must be received between December 1st and 31st. It is suggested that they be received by December 23rd to allow time for posting to an individuals account.



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Pulse Reject: W-H Directed Grand Jury

Following is a letter to the Public Pulse of the Omaha World-Herald. When the Observer called the World-Herald to see whether this letter would be printed, we were told that it had not arrived

20 November, 1991

Everybody suspected—but now we know, don't we?

It really was the World-Herald directing

the Franklin Grand Jury.

For doubters, read the 20 November 1991 editorial titled, "Kerrey, Too, Deserves Apology."

That's right, Bob Kerrey tells dirty jokes about lesbians and gets caught.

Immediately, the World-Herald decides that Bob Kerrey is the victim because the evil people dared to catch him committing his dirty joke routine.

The World-Herald editorially attacks the accusers and labels Kerrey as the "...target of a carefully crafted sabotage operation." And demands that his victims apologize to him.

In Franklin, the child-victim accusers were labeled as the bad people and the people they accused were the "target of a carefully crafted hoax."

Go ahead, World-Herald tell all us dumb Nebraskans that you did not write the script for the Franklin Grand Jury.

Respectfully,
John W. DeCamp

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If Abortion Is Criminalized

Self-Help Movement Hopes to Prevent Back Alley Disgrace

by Nell Bernstein

The author is a San Francisco Bay Area freelance writer and editor of Media File, the monthly publication of Media Alliance.

PACIFIC NEWS SERVICE

As the political battle over abortion rages in the courts and on the streets, a quieter movement is taking place behind closed doors aimed at training women to provide safe abortions for each other. Activists in the movement say their goal is to transform illegal abortion from a back-alley disgrace to an act of individual and collective self-determination.

"If the courts wipe out legal abortion completely there'll be a real revolution," predicts Carol Downer, a 30-year veteran of the reproductive rights movement who works with the Los Angeles-based Federation of Feminist Health Centers. "It's very obvious women will go on doing abortions."

Whereas self-induced abortions have long invoked the gory image of the coat hanger, the new movement boasts a more positive symbol, the Del Em, which is in keeping with the growing interest in medical self-care. Developed by feminist health workers in the early 1970s, the Del Em is a homemade contraption assembled from materials like aquarium tubing, plastic syringes and mason jars. It can alleviate a particularly painful or inconvenient period, or end a pregnancy up to ten weeks after conception.

Proponents say the Del Em is not only safe if performed by well trained practitioners; it is simpler, less invasive and less frightening than a doctor's office abortion. It's also virtually impossible to prevent people from doing it.

"It's easier to bust a clinic than a group of women who get together socially every once in a while and teach themselves to do menstrual extraction," says Cindy Pearson, director of the National Women's Health Network Program in Washington, D.C.

Interest in menstrual extraction ebbed after 1973, when the Supreme Court established the constitutional right to abortion in *Roe v. Wade*. But the 1989 Webster decision, and subsequent court rulings limiting access to abortion on the state level, have inspired a new wave of interest. "Our phones have been ringing ever since Webster," says Downer of the Federation of Feminist Health Centers. Many of the callers are women looking for advice about how to provide abortions for each other should the need arise.

The federation responded by putting out a video, "No Going Back," which includes footage demonstrating a menstrual extraction.

Despite the growing demand to learn the procedure, few mainstream pro-choice organizations are willing to endorse it. After "No Going Back" was released, for instance, the National Abortion Federation, based in Washington, D.C., announced it could not endorse

the technique without more information on the incidence of

complications. "We're worried about the procedure being performed in non-sterile settings," says membership director Pat Anderson, who adds that the videotape "minimized the potential for serious complications."

Traditional pro-choice advocates' primary concern is the political fight to keep abortions legal. "It would be very nice," says Cynthia Carey-Grant of the California Abortion Rights Action League, to think that women could provide safe illegal abortions for each other. "But they're (the self-help activists) not taking into account poor women, rural women and others who don't have those services available to them."

Even if safe illegal abortions could be made widely available, she adds, "there's more at stake here than the availability of abortion, like the right to privacy, the right of women to control their own reproductive systems."

In fact, self-help advocates say that if women can provide their own abortions, then

they can regain control of their fertility, doing something that has traditionally been in the hands of the medical profession.

Dido Hasper, who directs a four-clinic network in California affiliated with the Federation of Feminist Health Centers, believes that *Roe v. Wade* did not go far enough. "It made a decision between a woman and her doctor acceptable," she says, "but abortion should be in women's hands on a community basis. Until we regain information about ways to control our own fertility -- including doing our own abortions -- we won't have real freedom."

Self-help activists, many of whom are veterans of the pre-1973 abortion rights movement, look to history for inspiration. They point to the Jane Collective, a Chicago-based underground organization that provided 11,000 abortions over its four year existence. The Clergy Consultation Service, a nationwide network of 1400 ministers and rabbis, helped thousands of women go from state to state to obtain both illegal and legal abortions between 1967 and 1973.

Should abortion again become illegal in many states, the Quakers have set up an "overground railroad" that will house, transport and assist women if they must travel from state to state to obtain legal abortions.

Trish Walach, cofounder of the network, says although some of her fellow Quakers are against abortion, the project comes out of the Quaker tradition. "Freedom has always been a very important part of being a Quaker, and the freedom to choose to have an abortion or to continue a pregnancy is very basic," she says.

While no one in the movement is ready to throw out the coat-hanger buttons or prophecies of doom, few believe that self-induced or back-alley abortions are the wave of the future. "Illegal abortions will be far safer than in the past," says Downer. "Women are better consumers now; they know what to expect. And women's groups will become abortion referral groups."

"The image of the hospital orderly who goes home after work and does abortions in his garage won't be how it happens."

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Reader: Observer Biased on Abortion

Dear Editor,

In all honesty, I hope your publication is doing well but I must find fault with your continual antagonistic attitude and pathetic nitpicking of pro-life advocates.

In the Aug. 30, 1991 edition of the Nebraska Observer you made false allegations about pro-life activists in an article about the Baird-McNair debate and never corrected the false allegations. You accuse pro-lifers in absolute terms of failing "to advocate sane methods of pregnancy prevention beyond 'just say no.'" "This is false. Planned Parenthood does admit that Natural Family Planning (which is more than the rhythm method) is more effective than the birth control pill. This is because the hormone amount was reduced a few years ago due to concerns about cancer. However, at the same time, Planned Parenthood gave Omaha Public School teachers information stating that "Fertility Awareness" is less effective than the withdrawal method!! Many pro-life groups endorse, some even advocate Natural Family Planning. So your statement is false. Please note that Planned Parenthood doesn't try hard-to-sell Basil thermometers because they wouldn't make much money that way. In fact, I am certain they don't have any.

I am curious what you meant by "sane methods" because in a sentence that follows you state "... the reality that contraceptive failure is associated with as many as half of all abortions." May I add that the Alan Guttmacher institute found that as many as 1.2 million to 3.2 million pregnancies result from contraceptive failure and misuse each

year. So just what did you mean by "sane methods"? Perhaps your medical bias prevents you from seeing that medicine itself can not solve a social problem.

What infuriates me even more is your kid-glove treatment of Planned Parenthood. Dr. Fred Sai's open letter to the Catholic Church refers to the population growth problem and depletion of resources. All the studies that come to this conclusion follow the same methods and end up with the same results yet certain aspects are ignored. For instance, Americans consume 40% of the world's resources while making up now only 4.9% of the world's population. A good way to save the earth's resources would be for Americans to kill their own children. Secondly, the Third World does have effective "population control" caused by malaria, typhoid, cholera and many diseases that are no longer present in Western Industrial Democracies. Third, a look at a population growth cartogram clearly shows the politics of reproduction and casts a high shadow of doubt about a population explosion problem. Most population growth problems are localized in the most densely populated continent on earth. So why the concern for population growth? Because the population of Western Industrial Democracies has stopped growing and the growing Third World has started demanding their riches: the same old rich vs. poor story with plenty of racism. In the U.S., David Duke, "former" Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan who advocates Norplant and incentives for poor black women to be on Norplant for the same reasons.

Dr. Sai continues, "...claiming that the Pill

and other contraception have not liberated women but enslaved them, show the deepest misunderstanding of the family planning movement." Why should we believe Dr. Sai? His organization has found three entrances to stick contraceptives into women (vagina, mouth and arm) and his organization has yet to advocate a contraceptive that actually enters a man's body! Heck, what about choice for men? We are still stuck with the same old condom! Dr. Sai wants women to be sex machines who revolve around men. It is better than the mother machine because there are no children to feed! Great philosophy!

Dr. Sai claims that half a million women die from causes related to pregnancy. If you place that against 5 billion people you end up with a pretty small percentile. Dr. Sai says that 99% of these cases are in the world's poorest regions. This suggests to me that these deaths are due to a lack of anti-biotics and other medical equipment. Certain anti-biotics require refrigeration which is not available in poverty stricken countries. Also a lack of sterilization procedures due to the lack of electricity or clean water would also lead to infections. Infection is a major source of death with such conditions. Better politics would result if such conditions were improved instead of telling these people to stop having babies. When their children stop dropping dead from diseases like malaria, they will have fewer children. By the way, how are poor people in poor countries to pay for the expensive contraceptives? Bob Kerrey says he has

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Pennsylvania Elects Harris Wofford

Wofford's History: Civil Rights, Peace Corps Passion for Justice

by Colman McCarthy

You'll need to root through the back shelves of libraries and, if no luck there, get help from a professional book finder if you're in the market to learn what's in the mind and soul of Harris Wofford. The Senate's newest member — Pennsylvanians elected him resoundingly last Tuesday — is the author of four books, each charged with flinty prose and each giving a moral priority to the passions for justice and public service that marked Wofford's winning campaign.

In "India Afire", "It's Up To Us", "Embers of The World", and "Kennedys and Kings", Wofford ranges from the theoretical altruist armed with ideas and ideals to the political insider who kept a level head in the Kennedy White House while letting loose now and again with a speech saying that liberalism, if we stay with it, is our surest hope.

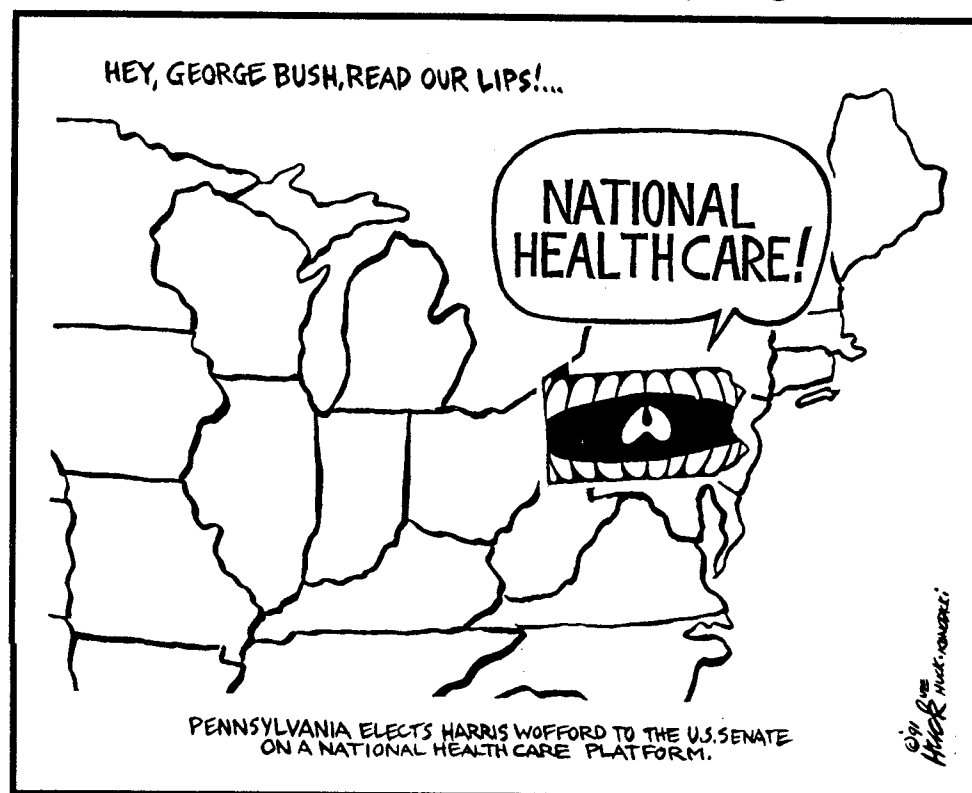
Post-election analyses of Wofford's Senate victory — almost as many as there are voters in Pennsylvania — are useful for explaining the success of a political longshot. A look at his books goes beyond utility, revealing a man of sense and sensitivity whose life — as a husband and parent, writer, civil-rights worker, Peace Corps official, a dozen years a president of Bryn Mawr College — has a fullness that would have brimmed with rich results had he never gone to the Senate. At the 30th reunion of former Peace Corps volunteers last July in Washington, Wofford, there at the program's beginning in 1961, was besieged by old friends who revered him for the enduring steadiness of his service to others.

"India Afire", coauthored in 1951 with his

wife Clare and a book long out of print, is Wofford's narrative of traveling thousands of miles across the then newly democratized country. He went to remote villages that few Westerners had ever seen, interviewing hundreds of Indians along the way. Wofford, 23 when the trip began in 1949 and who would be the first white graduate of Howard University law school three years later, was sent on a freelance fellowship by the Foundation for World Government to study the nonviolence of Mahatma Gandhi and Indian economics.

Sevagram, the impoverished village where Gandhi, assassinated the year before, had established his ashram and school, was one of the stops. Wofford believed Gandhi to be the 20th century's "greatest revolutionary." In his book, Wofford asks: "Is Gandhi not the main modern example of a democrat who successfully waged social revolution? He is the very embodiment of the democratic process and spirit. With his methods of constructive work and nonviolent direct action — even our Western parliamentary politics might become less hollow."

Wofford's enthusiasm for Gandhian thought and action would lead him to Martin Luther King Jr. in the mid-1950's after the Montgomery, Ala., bus boycott. Wofford would persuade King to travel to India, raising money for the trip. In "Kennedys and Kings" he recalls: "Before and after the India trip, King and I shared Gandhian stories and talked late into the night about effective American adaptations." In his Pennsylvania Senate campaign, Wofford displayed the essence of those Gandhian adaptations: an understanding of



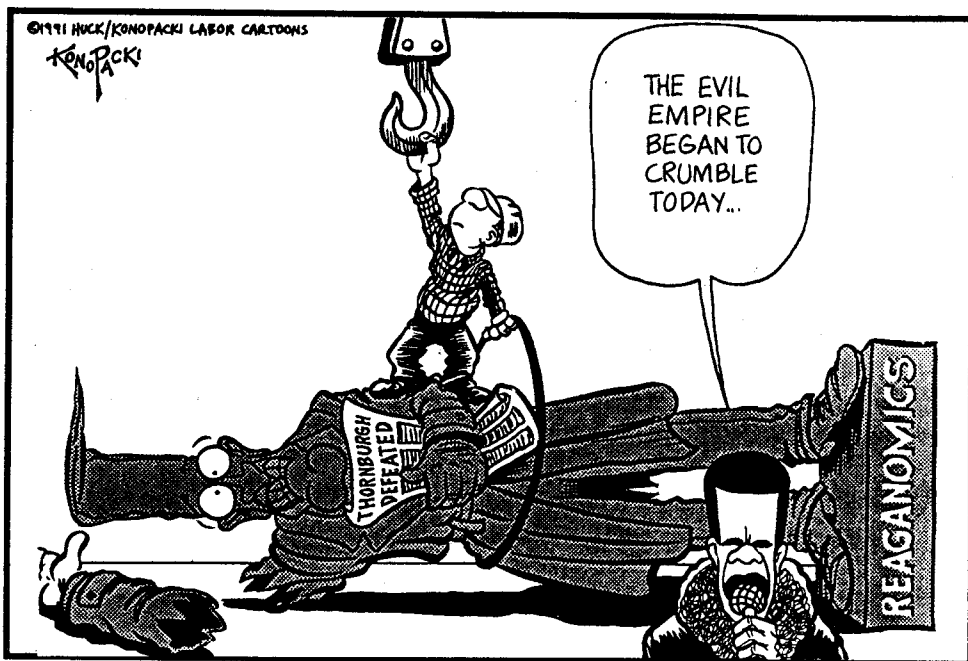
the concerns of people who need help and offering solutions, however basic they seemed. Wofford the 1991 democrat remembered what he wrote 40 years ago about his Indian intellectual mentor: "He would shock and perhaps transform most American liberals, for rather than those who promise high and produce little, Gandhi would any day prefer Boss Flynn and his colleagues who at least take care of the kids on the corner (or) bring sick voters to the clinics."

As a Southern-born independent, Wofford's choice of Howard law school rocked his family. For his grandmother from Little Rock, "it was the end of the world — She pleaded, 'You can go there to teach them, to help them, but you can't go and be a student with them.' When he said yes he could, Grandma collapsed and had to be hauled upstairs to bed.

The family should have known. At age 8, the young rebel had lived in Westchester, N.Y., for two years and returned for a visit to East Tennessee. A relative taunted him: "Little Harris Jr., you've been up North two years now — I suppose you think the nigras and us is equals." When I said yes, he went on: 'Pretty soon you'll decide that the monkeys and us is equals.' Having been reading Dr. Doolittle books, I argued that someday we might learn their language and treat animals better, too."

Wofford has had a lifetime of such wild thoughts. Read them in his book and listen to them in his Senate speeches. It's likely the best is still to come.

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With Abortion Scrap Removed Wofford Offered Social Platform

Most Americans looked at the recently concluded Senate race in Pennsylvania and wondered what it meant for the Bush administration's domestic agenda. National Catholic Reporter noted that both successful Democratic incumbent Sen. Harris Wofford and his defeated opponent, resigned Bush Attorney General Richard Thornburgh, were, nominally at least, pro-life candidates.

Wofford, a Catholic convert, was originally appointed senator (to fill deceased Sen. John Heinz's unexpired term) by Pennsylvania's Catholic and pro-life Governor Robert Casey. Wofford had said he subscribes to Pennsylvania's antiabortion laws, the toughest on any state statute book.

Outside pro and con abortion forces stayed

away from organizing a pro-life pro-choice fight in Pennsylvania because the candidates were so similar. The absence of that fight, in effect, freed Wofford to campaign on economic and social issues.

Pennsylvania is a Democratic-majority state, a blue-collar state, that frequently votes Republican. This election, in which Democrats and Republicans voted for the Democrat, perhaps shows what happens when voters do not have to hold their nose to get past the contentious abortion scrap as they make their way to the polls.

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Anita Hill Bore Onslaught From Those in Power

by A'Jamal Byndon

After reading the three pieces (in TNO) regarding Anita Hill/Judge Clarence Thomas parade, it was apparent the issue of race was notably absent. The question is why? Frequently, when one discusses the issues of sex and race, people get clay feet. This issue was an archetype of conflicts we have regarding gender and race.

It was not surprising Hill-Thomas prize fight for many was good vs. evil. Thomas the old pathetic Booker T. Washington clone, negated the issue of race all of his life until the eleventh hour. Anita Hill, an opportunist supporter of Bork illustrates that this was a fight between two misfits. The plot was reflective of the mentality of denial.

Based upon the circumstantial comments and general demeanor I found her comments more credible. Yet, according to the opinion polls conducted during this charade, proclaimed that the majority of African Americans supported Thomas. If true, this goes to illustrate the mentality of many African Americans in this country. Thomas and his pundits clearly conducted an effective campaign to win the hearts of the Negro masses.

What was even more insidious regarding this parody was the larger picture. The ineptitude of the democratic-white-males. Many of the Senators were inflicted with a case of verbal delirium. Senator Howell Heflin D-Ala was an example that any feeble-minded person could get elected. He was forever, posturing and his-multicompounded questions had no substance. It appears he was profiling for the cameras. Many of the Senators on the committee had probably committed the same offenses during their careers.

Meanwhile, millions of people are starving in Africa, Asia and suffering from many calamities.

Wouldn't it be more productive if society devoted such attention to seeking to alleviate poverty, diseases and starvation? Meanwhile, the ranks of the unemployed Americans continue to grow.

Harassment is as old as American politics. The likes of Arlen Specter and Orrin Hatch told people of color that power has the ability to make the truth into a lie and the lie into the truth. In light of all the sexual indiscretions and misdeeds of Congress, it would have been better to have Jimmy Swaggart defending Anita Hill.

It was ironic that Senators John Danforth, Dixiecrat Strom Thurmond and other die-hard racists were guiding Thomas through this maze. This Uncle Tom play illustrates that life for African Americans will never be the same. Senator Thurmond only a few decades ago, was supporting the Ku Klux Klan, and reflected many of the sentiments of David Duke (Duck). And to believe that from such a pack,

one can acquire justice is akin to playing with matches with petro on one's buttocks and thinking nothing can happen.

Harassment germinate because too many accept the notion that "you just draw more attention to it, or sound like a whiner, so you can't win."

It appears many in our society have become more sensitive to not making racial slurs or making vulgar racial remarks in the open because many are more apt to dress them down. Yet, the issue of sexual harassment continues unabated because too many women lack the wherewithal to confront such problems. Moreover, it is equally disconcerting to hear women use the word bitch. Such sexist words add fire to the heat. Sexual harassment is allegedly defined in that context of the recipients — **if it is unwanted**. Yet, where it is written that one has to enjoy vulgarity in order to become intimate. Therefore, for all of the bimboist personalities who accept such demeaning comments, they in turn make it difficult for others. The onslaught on Anita Hill proves those in power writes the definitions.

If we look at many of our social welfare programs, they are in shambles because many of the recipients are women and particularly poor women of color. Many white, middle-class women in their smug positions do not give a damn about what occurs because they believe it can't happen to them.

We have a system where school children are compelled to salute a flag, a symbol of dead white males, injustice and outright oppression. The prisons are becoming packed full of African-Americans similar to the slave ships of the 16th century.

For Anita Hill, this parody was only a small battle in the overall struggle because it told African Americans that there are still a few, who would stand for principles over money. Anita Hill will win a place in the hearts of many because of telling it like it was.

Uncle Thomas acquired support because many fail to understand the nature of the beast. Uncle Thomas, a confused Black man who has bootlicked at the feet of best racists, conservatives and most of all, Thomas is someone who has cursed the bridges which carried him across — his race and affirmative action. Thomas is merely a reflection of the double standards of American politics.

As we move into more ominous time, it became even more arrogant that white liberals, their fair-weather sidekicks believe they can placate serious problems. When all is said and done, it will be apparent that this was just another soap opera to help us to forget the struggle. We live in a cutthroat era where nothing is respected. If anything, Thomas is guilty by means of insanity. Need I say more.

Thomas Hearings: Media Ignored Conflicts, Links to South Africa

Prior to Anita Hill's charges of sexual harassment against Clarence Thomas, most U.S. media played down extensive evidence of Thomas' ethically dubious behavior both as a judge and a Reagan administration official. Many media conveyed the impression that he was a person of integrity whose otherwise clean record was besmirched by Hill.

During the Thomas hearings, FAIR contacted numerous national media outlets, urging them not to overlook stories that raised serious questions about Thomas' credibility and character. When allegations of sexual harassment surfaced, FAIR distributed relevant material from Ronald Reagan's 1980 Equal Employment Opportunity Commission transition team of which Clarence Thomas was a member.

The transition team's final report criticizes regulations on sexual harassment, saying, "The vagueness of the definition of discrimination has undoubtedly led to a barrage of trivial complaints against employers around the nation. The elimination of personal slights and sexual advances which contribute to 'an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment' is a goal impossible to reach. Expenditure of the EEOC's limited resources in pursuit of this goal is unwise."

Thomas signed on to this analysis as part of the full report. Moreover, as one of two members of the team's subcommittee on regulations and guidelines, he was directly responsible for inserting the passage. It was certainly a newsworthy insight into his views just before the alleged sexual harassment of Anita Hill began, particularly since it dismisses exactly the kind of harassment that Thomas was charged with. FAIR provided this document to the press (along with another memo, signed by Thomas, that criticized sexual harassment rules as overly broad), but it fell by the wayside during the hearings after a brief mention by a few national media outlets (AP, NBC News, New York Times).

The bulk of the media did little to pursue leads linking Thomas to lobbyists for the apartheid government of South Africa. One of these is Jay Parker, Thomas' political mentor, of whom Thomas has said "I...hope I can have a fraction of [his] courage and strength." Parker is the founder of the Lincoln Review, a journal for right-wing blacks, which featured Clarence Thomas on its editorial advisory board. (Thomas remained on the board even after becoming an appeals court judge, in apparent violation of judicial ethics.)

In 1985, Parker and his associate William Keyes founded a firm called International Public Affairs Consultants. Its sole client was the government of South Africa, which paid

IPAC \$360,000 a year to fight U.S. sanctions. One IPAC-sponsored event was a reception for the South African ambassador; the firm's report on the event lists Clarence Thomas as a participant.

FAIR gave news media a memo outlining these facts, but even when Thomas was questioned about the South Africa connection by Sen. Paul Simon in televised hearings, most media ignored it. (one exception was New York Newsday, 9/12/91, which suggested that Thomas' answers to Simon were false.)

Another facet of Thomas' career that was virtually ignored is the striking conflicts of interest he faced in his short tenure on the appeals court (The Nation, 9/23/91). He ruled on a case involving Ralston Purina, helping to overturn a \$10.4 million damage award against the company, even though the firm is largely owned by the family of Thomas' close friend and patron, Sen. John Danforth. USA Today noted this conflict-of-interest, but the New York Times and Washington Post did not report the story.

Although Clarence Thomas was a vocal supporter of Oliver North, Thomas did not excuse himself from ruling on the appeal of North's criminal convictions. (Another judge, Abner Mikva, disqualified himself, because as a Congress member he had voted to establish the Iran-Contra special counsel.)

Thomas' participation in these cases appears to violate judicial ethics, which mandates that judges step down in cases where their "impartiality might reasonably be questioned." Yet New York Times' Neil Lewis concluded his post-mortem on the Thomas hearings (10/19/91) by citing Terry Eastland, a Reagan Justice Department official, who said that "if Judge Thomas believed he could not sit on a case because of any animosity resulting from the confirmation process, he would certainly excuse himself."

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Dead Journalist Had Been Investigating October Surprise. BCCI Evidence of Foul Play Underreported

by Liza Featherstone and Peter Rothberg

On August 10, 44-year-old journalist Joseph D. (Danny) Casolaro was found dead in a bathtub of bloody water in a Martinsburg, West Virginia, hotel room. His wrists had been slashed twelve times. Casolaro -- who had been investigating an "octopus" of possible links between the "October Surprise," the Inslaw scandal, BCCI corruption, and the Iran/contras affair -- had gone to Martinsburg amid a series of death threats to meet with a key source, according to what he had told friends and associates.

The body was discovered just as Congress was about to open a formal investigation into the October Surprise allegations that members of the Reagan team bribed Iranian officials with arms to hold the American hostages until after the 1980 election. Although all who knew Casolaro agreed that he would have been unlikely to take his own life, the police have classified his death a suicide.

Casolaro's octopus theory was not his alone. Other journalists have speculated that the decade's major scandals are interwoven. However, it is unlikely that such speculation will get a fair hearing, as theories contrary to official wisdom (remember JFK's murder) remain safely delusional because outfits like the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* consistently omit evidence that might give them credence.

Coverage of Casolaro's death has ignored numerous details that point to foul play. The *Times*, in the course of fifty paragraphs on the case, did not mention that Casolaro's body was illegally embalmed, making the autopsy more difficult. Though the *Post* did acknowledge this startling irregularity -- noting gently that embalming was "apparently premature" (August 14, p. A4) -- it did not report that it was illegal without the family's permission, which was never received.

Although both the *Times* and the *Post* mentioned that Casolaro received death threats, they neglected to point out that according to William and Nancy Hamilton, co-owners of the Inslaw software company, several of their intelligence sources had expressed concern that Casolaro would be murdered if he continued his investigation (*St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, September 19, p.2). The Hamiltons, who say they told this to reporters from both major dailies, have proven credible in the past: Two U.S. courts have upheld their claims that the Justice Department stole their software and forced their company into bankruptcy.

'You're Dead, You Bastard'

Even more curious is the way that two unexplained phone calls have been studiously ignored. The first one came to Casolaro's home in Falls Church, Virginia, on the evening of Saturday, August 10, the day Casolaro died, but two days before his family was notified. When a housekeeper picked up the phone, a voice said, "You're dead, you bas-

tard," and quickly hung up.

The next day -- still 24 hours before Casolaro's death became widely known -- *Village Voice* national affairs editor Dan Bischoff received an anonymous call reporting that a journalist who had been investigating the October Surprise had just been killed in West Virginia and that this should be checked out.

These calls were repeatedly noted in news briefs across the country, yet the *Times* neglected to mention either one, and the *Post* mentioned only the call to Casolaro's home once in a brief aside on August 13 (p. A8).

Missing Papers

Other details that complicate the suicide verdict have simply been ignored. Though B. Drummond Ayres, Jr., saw fit to garner quotes from the Justice Department, the White House, and the FBI (*New York Times*, September 3, p. D12), he failed to report that all of Casolaro's papers and his tape deck were missing from the hotel room or that, although a half-empty jug of wine was found near the body, the autopsy showed no alcohol in Casolaro's blood.

Similarly, in the midst of a story which ignored evidence inconsistent with the claim of suicide, Gary Lee of the *Post* brazenly cautioned that, though "Friends and relatives strongly suspect foul play," they have "presented no evidence of it" (August 13, p. A8).

This selectivity of detail gets more elaborate. The *Post*, unlike the *Times*, named Michael Riconosciuto, a computer specialist who said that the Justice Department had hired him to modify the stolen Inslaw software. But all the *Post* told us about Riconosciuto was that "he has been in jail since last March on drug-related charges" (August 19, p. A13). This information, presented in a vacuum, diminished his credibility and cast doubt on Casolaro's investigations, since the story incorrectly suggested that Riconosciuto was his only source. This is unfortunate, since additional facts lend Riconosciuto's drug charges quite different implications.

In an affidavit issued for the Inslaw case last March, Riconosciuto said that Peter Videnieks, the Justice Department official who dealt with Inslaw, warned him not to cooperate with House Judiciary Committee members who had been looking into the scandal. The affidavit described Riconosciuto's own role in the software scam, and implicated Earl Brian -- former president of UPI -- in the affair. (See Joel Bleifuss, *In These Times*, May 29, p. 11). Brian, a long-time crony of Edwin Meese, worked on both of Ronald Reagan's presidential campaigns and is alleged to have been a key player in the arms-for-hostages October Surprise deal.

Since Riconosciuto went public with his revelations, other informants from the world of covert operations have verified and augmented his claims, according to former Attorney General Elliot Richardson, an inscrutable

maverick representing the Hamiltons in their ongoing case against the Justice Department (*New York Times*, October 21, p. A17).

Coincidence?

Eight days after filing his affidavit, Riconosciuto was arrested in Washington state and charged with distributing methamphetamine. He is currently awaiting trial without bail -- unusually stiff treatment for an offense of this kind. The arrest was too coincidental for William Hamilton, who explained that Riconosciuto "stated under oath that he was threatened with reprisal. And then he's arrested within a week of filing that affidavit," (UPI wire report, March 31, 1991). Coincidental or not, this was another newsworthy element of the story that was steadfastly ignored by the *Times* and the *Post*.

Or Retribution?

The circumstances surrounding Riconosciuto's arrest are important to the Casolaro case, as they suggest that linking Inslaw to the October Surprise could lead to "coincidental" retribution. The *Post* used Riconosciuto's drug charges to discredit Casolaro when they actually provide telling evidence that he may have been on to something.

Elliot Richardson, who has called for the appointment of a special prosecutor to investigate the case, also believes Casolaro may have been on to something. "It's hard to come up with any reason for [Casolaro's] death other than that he was deliberately murdered because he was so close to uncovering sinister elements in what he called the 'Octopus,'" Richardson said (*Time*, August 26, p. 21).

Even if the Octopus does live, however, its tentacles will rarely be noted by the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* as they practice a well-rehearsed evasion of any suggestion of government duplicity.

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Sullivan

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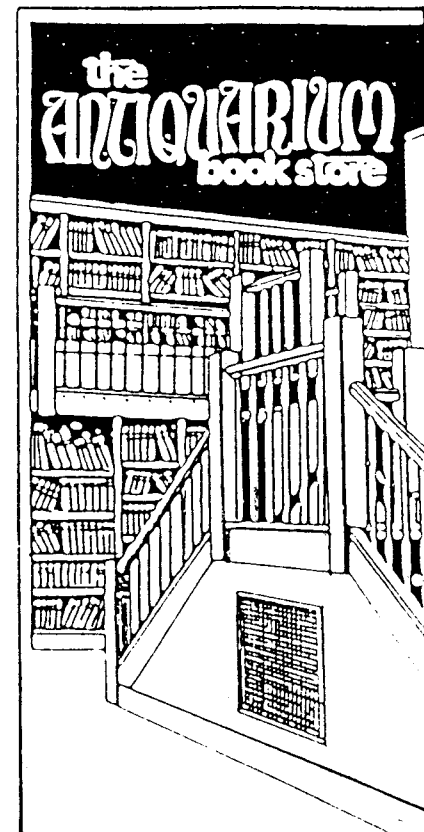
an answer. Have you and I pay for it. How interesting that Bob Kerrey, Dr. Sai and David Duke have something in common. Gee, I wonder why the Catholic Church won't talk to Dr. Sai?

I will give you credit for one thing. I think excommunicating a woman for procuring abortion is stupid and fails to recognize the male doctor holding the murder weapon and the responsibility of the man who helped get her pregnant in the first place. So what are you doing about changing Canon law?

Sincerely,

Andrew Sullivan

P.S. The World-Herald is very big on population control.



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Creighton University

27th and California, Omaha.
280-2509Hours: 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Sat.; noon-4
p.m. Sun.Through Dec. 14th-B.F.A. Thesis Show.
Deborah Jaeger, printmaker; Michael
Pflaum, painter; and David Dienstbier.**Eyesound Gallery**109 N. 50th, Omaha.
553-4432

Hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Sat.

Gallery 722709 Leavenworth, Omaha.
345-3347**Garden of the Zodiac**Old Market Passageway, 1042 Howard,
Omaha.
341-1877.**Haydon Gallery**335 N. 8th, Hardy Building, Lincoln.
475-5421

Hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Sat.

Haymarket Art Gallery119 S. 9th St., Lincoln.
475-1061

Hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tues.-Sat.

Hillmer Art GalleryCollege of St. Mary, 1901 S. 72nd St.,
Omaha.
399-2621

Hours: 1 p.m.-5 p.m. daily, except Fri.

Through Dec. 12th-9th Annual NATA
Undergraduate Art Show.**Iowa Western Community
College Fine Arts Gallery**2700 College Rd. Council Bluffs.
325-3352**Jewish Community Center**333 S. 132nd St., Omaha.
334-8200Hours: 8 a.m.-10 p.m. Mon.-Thurs.; 8
a.m.-5 p.m. Fri.;

1 p.m.-7 p.m. Sat.; 1 p.m.-7 p.m. Sun.

Joslyn Art Museum2200 Dodge, Omaha.
342-3300Hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tues. & Wed., Fri.
& Sat.; 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Thurs.; 1 p.m.-7
p.m. Sun.Dec. 5th through Jan. 19th-Posters of
Paris, 1800-1900, from the Terry and Louis
L. Silver Collection.Through Jan. 19th-Kratky Film: The Art
of Czechoslovakian Animation.Through May 24th-John David Brcin,
sculptor.**Local Artists' Exchange**

Standard Blue, 1415 Harney, Omaha.

Hours: 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Fri.; noon-4
p.m. Sat. & Sun.**Metro Arts Artspace**601 S. 16th St., Omaha.
341-7910Hours: 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri. or by
appointment.**Museum of Nebraska Art**24th & Central Ave., Kearney.
(308) 234-8559

Hours: 1 p.m.-5 p.m. Tues.-Sat.

Through Jan. 5th-Terence Duren: A
Retrospective Exhibition.**Passageway Gallery**417 S. 11th St. Omaha.
341-1910Hours: 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Wed.; 11 a.m.-
9 p.m. Thurs.; 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Fri. & Sat.;
or by appointment anytime.**Photographer's Gallery, Inc.**4831 Dodge St., Omaha.
551-5731Hours: 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Mon.-Fri.; 1 p.m.-5
p.m. Sun.; closed Sat.; or by appointment
anytime.**Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery**12th & "R" Sts, UNL Campus, Lincoln.
472-2461Hours: Tues. & Wed. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sun.
2 p.m.-9 p.m.; Thurs.-Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.;
closed Mon.

Through Dec. 1st-Off the Wall.

Through Jan. 26th-Recent Photographic
Acquisitions.Through Feb. 23rd-Sheldon Solo:
Michael Heizer.Dec. 3rd through Jan. 26th-Master of Fine
Arts Student Biennial.**13th St. Gallery**

1264 S. 13th St., Omaha.

Hours: 1 p.m.-5 p.m. Fri., Sat., & Sun.

Sioux City Art Center

513 Nebraska St., Sioux City, Iowa.

**University of Nebraska at
Omaha Gallery**616 S. 11th St. (2nd floor in CAT Bldg.)
Hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Fri.Through Dec. 20th- B.F.A. Thesis Exhi-
bition-Julie Holman, painting; Jackie
Eihausen, drawing; Beth A. Haffke,
drawing; Michele MCKay, printmaking;
Rita M. Fish, ceramics; CEC Hardacker,
printmaking; Richard Baesler, painting &
sculpture.**OTHER MIDWEST GALLERY
LISTINGS****Des Moines Art Center**4700 Grand Ave., Des Moines, Iowa.
(515) 277-4405Hours: 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Tues., Wed., Fri., &
Sat.; 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Thurs.; noon-5 p.m.
Sun.; closed Mon.**Gallery 306**102 S. Dakota Ave., Sioux Falls, South
Dakota.**The Nelson Atkins Museum of
Art**4525 Oak St., Kansas City, Missouri.
(816) 561-4000Hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tues.-Sat.; 1 p.m.-5
p.m. Sun.

Admission: \$4 adults; \$1 students.

Permanent collection free on Sat.

The Peace Museum

430 W. Erie

Chicago, Illinois 60610
(312) 440-1860Thanks to contributions, the Peace Museum
will continue to maintain offices at 430
West Erie, as well as the Traveling Exhi-
bition Series, as they look to move to a new
location. To keep up to date on the status
of their plans to move, the Traveling
Exhibitions, or anything else, just call the
above phone number.This year they are making some items from
the gift store available through the mail. If
you're looking for that perfect gift for
Uncle Bernie or you just want a cool t-shirt,
you can support the museum at the same
time. Call and ask for the list of items
available and order information.**Witter Gallery**

609 Cayuga St., Storm Lake Iowa.

**Calendar
Information****Jeanette Morgan****455-7205****P.O. Box 8158****Omaha, NE**

a r e a e v e n t s

Note: Information was current as of press time, but changes may occur. Call for updates.

DIRECTORY OF VENUES:

Ballet Omaha, performs at the Orpheum Theatre, 346-7332.

Bellevue Little Theatre, 203 W. Mission Ave., 291-1554.

Bemis Foundation/New Gallery, 614 S. 11th St., 341-7130. Open 11 a.m.-5 p.m. daily.

Blue Barn Theater, 1258 S. 13th St., 345-1576.

Center Stage, 30th & "Q" Sts., 733-5777.

Chanticleer Theater, 830 Franklin Ave., Council Bluffs, (712) 323-9955.

Circle Theater, 6064 Maple St., 553-4715.

Creighton University, Performing Arts Center, 30th & Burt Sts.;

Art Gallery, 27th & California Sts., 280-2509.

Emmy Gifford Children's Theater, 3504 Center St., 345-4849.

Firehouse Dinner and Theatre, 11th & Jackson Sts, 346-8833.

Grande Olde Players, 701 S. 39th St., 345-2462.

Henry Doorly Zoo, 10th & Deer Park Ave., 733-8400.

Howard St. Tavern, 1112 Howard St, Old Market, 341-0433

Joslyn Art Museum, 2200 Dodge St., 342-3300.

Mary Riepma Ross Film Theater, Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, 12th & "R" Sts., Lincoln. 472-5353.

Magic Theater, 1417 Farnam St., 346-1227.

New Cinema, 1514 Davenport St., 346-8033. Film screenings most weekends at 5:20, 7:30 & 9:40 Fri. & Sat.; Sun. at 3 p.m.

Omaha Civic Auditorium, 18th & Capitol, 444-4750.

Omaha Children's Museum, 500 S. 20th, 342-6164. Open 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tues.-Sat.; 1 p.m.-5 p.m. Sun.

Omaha Community Playhouse, 69th & Cass Sts., 553-0800.

Omaha Symphony Orchestra, see listings for venues, 342-3560

Omaha Workshop Theater, 3419 "L" St. 558-2953. Shows Fri. & Sat. at 8 p.m.

Opera /Omaha, performs at Orpheum Theater, 346-0357.

Orpheum Theater, 409 S. 16th St., 444-4750.

Peter Kiewit Conference Center, 1313 Farnam St.

Rosenblatt Stadium, 13th & Bert Murphy Dr., 734-5271.

Strauss Performing Arts Center, on the UNO campus, 63rd & Dodge.

Sunset Speedway, 114th & State, 493-5271.

University of Nebraska at Omaha, 63rd & Dodge.

Upstairs Dinner Theater, 221 S. 19th St., 344-7777.

Wesley House, African Community Theater, 2001 N. 35th St.

Western Heritage Museum, 801 S. 10th St., 444-5071.

SPECIAL EVENTS

V.V.A. Chapter #146 General Membership Meetings, 2nd Tues. each month at the V.F.W. Post, 33rd & Leavenworth. Call Tom at 453-2568 for more info.

Bisexual Support Group meets 1st Mon. of each month, 7 p.m. at the Cornerstone, in the upstairs conference room, 640 N. 16th St., Lincoln.

ENVIRONMENT, PEACE & SOCIAL JUSTICE

Earth Day Committee meets every Tues. at Willa Cather Branch Library, 44th & Center, 6:30 p.m.

Ecology Now meets every Sun in Milo Bail at 4 p.m.

Youth for Peace meets every Wed., 6 p.m., upstairs at the Antiquarium, 1215 Harney.

C.L.E.A.N. (City Lead Environmental Action Nebraska) meets 1st Thurs. each month at Dorothy Lanphier's, 5302 Izard, 554-1108.

No-Name Recycling Group meets every Sat., 10 a.m.-noon at the First Presbyterian Church 216 S. 34th St. (34th & Farnam). The Nov. 3rd meeting, however, will not be held at the church. Location to be announced. Contact Patricia Dugan: 345-2206.

No-Name is looking for people to speak out on the Blue Bag program for or against Call 444-5520, main number for Omaha City Council to find out which Tuesday at 2 p.m. during Dec. will be the public hearing on the Omaha Effort Recycling bids and contract.

Ongoing: Nebraskans for Peace Health Care Signature Campaign. Call 453-0776 for more info.

Habitat for Humanity Site Work Opportunities: If you can work, call the office, 457-5657, to find the location of any Tuesday (9-3), Saturday, (9-3) or Thursday (5-8:30) workday. Please schedule ahead if you have a group. One big need now is for skilled leaders who will gain experience through repeated workdays.

Make plans now for yourself or your group

to attend **The Second Global Structures Convocation in Washington, D.C., Feb. 6-9, 1992.**

This is a working conference on international laws and institutions for sustainable development and a viable global community. For registration info call 202-833-9585.

If you are interested in working towards a **Nebraska ERA**, contact Rose Meile at the Nebraska Commission on the Status of Women at 1-471-2039.

Dec 6th-Nebraskans for Peace Caroling Party, "Sing Your Peace," 6-8 p.m., First Unitarian Church, 31st and Harney Sts. Note: You do not have to sing in key to attend! Includes refreshments and music by Mark Nelson of the Linoma Mashers.

Dec. 12th-Annual elections and holiday celebrations for Omaha's chapter of NOW 7 p.m. at 5008 Decatur St.

EXHIBITS & DISPLAYS

Through Jan. 12th-Omaha Children's Museum exhibit: **Dinamations Real Sea Monsters-"Dinosaurs" of the Deep.** An exhibit of giant, robotic, prehistoric sea creatures that will appear to swim and dive in a magical environment that will delight visitors of all ages.

FILM

Mary Riepma Ross Film Theater, Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, Lincoln.

Fri., Nov. 29th through Sun., Dec. 1st-"The Comfort of Strangers," directed by Paul Schrader plus a short, "Rehearsals for Extinct Anatomies," by the Brothers Quay. Screenings at 7 and 9:15 p.m. Matinees on Sat. at 12:45 and 3 p.m. and on Sun. at 2:30 and 4:45 p.m.

Thurs., Dec. 5th through Sun., Dec. 8th and again Thurs., Dec. 12th through Sun., Dec. 15th-"Europa, Europa," by writer/director Agnieszka Holland, based on the true story of Solomon Perel, a German Jew who spent much of World War II passing for Aryan in an elite Hitler Youth academy. Screenings at 7 and 9:15 p.m. Matinees on Sat. at 12:45 and 3 p.m. and on Sun. at 2:30 and 4:45 p.m.

Sun., Dec. 8th-"Tales from the Winnipeg Film Group," a very weird collection of independent short films from some of our Canadian neighbors including, "Two Men in Search of a Plot," "The Milkman Cometh," "We're Talking Vulva," and more. Screenings at 3, 5, 7, and 9 p.m.

Thurs., Dec. 19th through Sun., Dec 22nd and again Thurs. Dec. 26 through Sun., Dec 29th-"Truly, Madly, Deeply," directed by Anthony Minghella. Screenings at 7 and 9 p.m. Matinees on Sat. at 1 and 3 p.m. and on Sun. at 3 and 5 p.m.

at Eppley Auditorium, U.N.O.

Dec. 6th through Dec. 8th-"Celine and Julie Go Boating," a 1974 film by Jacques Rivette, plus a short, "An Eater." Screenings at 7 p.m. Fri., Sat., and Sun.

MUSIC & DANCE

The **Coffee House Series** continues this fall/winter at the Blue Barn Theater. **Every Mon.** at 8 p.m. the series features original material by local acoustic artists. Bring your own coffee cup. Call 345-1576 for more info.

"New Music Tuesdays." Most Tues. nights the Howard Street Tavern features alternative music from local and national acts.

Every Sun. 6-9 p.m.-Omaha International Folk Dancers. Grace Lutheran Church, 26th & Woolworth. Beginners welcome.

Nov. 13th through Nov. 17th-Creighton University's "A Company of Dancers" featuring choreographic works by dance professors Valerie Roche and Susan Dickson-Matsunami, and one work by guest choreographer Amy Herrman. Performances at 8 p.m. Wed. through Sat. and on Sun. at 2/30.

THEATER

Omaha Community Playhouse

Through Dec. 22nd-Mainstage: "A Christmas Carol"

Through Dec. 8th-Fonda McGuire Series: "A Funny Thing Happened to Me on the Way to the Forum."

Emmy Gifford Children's Theater

Nov. 29th through Dec. 29th-"Charlie and the Chocolate Factory."

Firehouse Dinner Theater

Through Jan. 5th-"I Do, I Do."

Blue Barn Theater

Nov. 29th through Dec. 22nd-"Orphans."

Circle Theater

Through Dec. 23rd-"Tilly's Holiday Extravaganza."

Interim Performing Arts Center, Creighton University

Dec. 5th through 7th-"One-Act Play Festival," offers four diverse plays: David Brink's "Pink Eye," Anton Chekov's "A Marriage Proposal," Julie Bovasso's "Schubert's Last Serenade," and Tennessee Williams' "Talk to Me Like the Rain, and Let Me Listen." Festival begins at 8 p.m., tickets \$2, available at the door. A readers' theatre production of Ray Bradbury's "Dandelion Wine" will be performed Sat. night in lieu of the Tennessee Williams play. Call 280-2509 for more info.

Grande Olde Players

Nov. 29th through Dec. 22nd-"On the Air."

Sports Dogs Also Are Affectionate Companions

Pitbulls' Menacing Reputation Recently Acquired

by David Stone

The very term "pitbull" causes John Q. Public to visualize doggy disaster — but the canine that bears that sobriquet was created not for cruelty but strictly for "sport."

In England's early 1800's when Parliament banned the ancient bloodsport of bull-baiting by Bulldogs (hence the name) the "sporting men" of England were left without a sport. Being resourceful, they turned to dog-fights staged in 14x14x2 pits, only to realize that the Bulldog lacked the necessary quickness and bellicosity required for the game.

They solved the problem by crossing the Bulldog with the Old English Terrier, resulting in a smaller, quicker, more combative dog with the Bulldog's tenacity and the Terrier's spark. The "best bred to the best" over the years produced a nonpareil fighting machine, the pitbull, which, although not the essence of nonviolence by any estimation, was still by virtue of the rules of the sport and the code of the breeders, a dog that in its own way contributed meaningfully to human society. Coalminers and chainmakers in central England even kept pitbulls as family dogs due to the breed's fondness for the companionship of people, especially children.

In the late 1860's Cockney Charlie Lloyd brought the first pitbulls to America where they quickly supplanted other breeds and crosses in the fighting pits of this country. Pitbulls eventually became popular with the general public as pets so that the majority of them were never fought. Indeed, there is an extant 1904 picture of young Freddie Austerlitz sitting beside his pet pitbull right here in good ol' Omaha. Never heard of Freddie Austerlitz? Wrong! You know of him as Fred Astaire. Following World War I, pit fighting was banned in England and the United States, not

because of its cruelty but because the betting that inevitably accompanies dogfighting — unlike that of horse racing — cannot be controlled by the state for tax purposes.

(Regarding cruelty, no dog of any breed can be forced to fight. Unlike other dogs who enter brief combat only for food, territory, or sex, a pitbull fights simply because he enjoys it and may cease fighting at any point during a match simply by turning his head away from his opponent. [The terms and rules of an organized dog fight are too complex to treat with here.])

...there exists a vast shadowy subculture of those who want to own a large, mean, threatening canine.... Not so long ago the denizens of this subculture got into German Shepherds and nearly ruined the breed before moving on to Dobermanns and wreaking havoc there. Then they moved into St. Bernards and managed to turn a considerable number of that kindest and gentlest of breeds into neurotic bullies. Before long these "people" discovered the pitbull...

Pitbull populations declined in both countries until 1935 when fanciers decided to turn their gladiators into show dogs, registered in the (English) Kennel Club as Staffordshire Bull Terriers or the American Kennel Club as Staffordshire Terriers. For many years, some American breeders double-registered their dogs as Staffordshire Terriers in the AKC and as Pitbulls in the United Kennel Club.

The first pitbull to be registered as a Staffordshire Terrier was Pete (the pied dog with the circle around one eye) in the "Our Gang" comedies. Pete was a prime example of the pitbull's love for children.

Love for children?

Lately the media have been

filled with horrifying accounts of mutilation and savagery attributed to members of the pitbull breed. Despite the media's notorious inaccuracy and chronic myopia, some of those accounts were partly true.

After a hundred and twenty years of peaceful cohabitation with the American people, the pitbull suddenly acquired a reputation as a menace to man.

The how and why of it is amazingly simple: In the world of dogs, there exists a vast shadowy subculture of those who want to own

a large, mean, threatening canine that will reflect their own belligerent attitude toward society and the world. They buy the cheapest specimens they can find and proceed to produce \$35 puppies by cross-breeding or by mating mother to son, father to daughter, brother to sister without regard for consequences to the breed.

Not so long ago the denizens of this subculture got into German Shepherds and nearly ruined the breed before moving on to Dobermanns and wreaking havoc there. Then they moved into St. Bernards and managed to turn a considerable number of that kindest and gentlest of breeds into neurotic bullies.

Before long these "people" discovered the pitbull, only to find out that they had got in over their heads. Pitbulls — physically the strongest but genetically the most delicate of all breeds — did not thrive under such a regime.

Pitbulls need continuous human interaction, companionship, and affection. Deprived of it, even a well-bred pitbull left tied outside becomes a walking time-bomb. A badly-bred pitbull or crossbred is sure bet, sooner or later, to manufacture trouble in megadoses. (Consider this: a pitbull that wants to get to the other side of a chain-link fence may simply eat a hole through it!)

Twenty years ago, virtually no pitbulls existed in the Omaha area — certainly none of the "right kind" because there was (and is) no organized dog fighting in the Nebraska-Iowa area according to the late Pete Sparks of Starke, Florida, walking encyclopedia of dogfighting

and editor of "Your Friend and Mine" a national privately-circulated publication devoted to the "sport."

Only some 150 men in the entire country are believed to participate in organized dog fights in which the combatants are matched at even weights for wagers running to four and five figures, men who must train their proteges with utmost care because among mammals only the canine eats, drinks, sweats, and fights with his mouth. They train their charges as carefully as boxing managers train their fighters and employ none of the devices popularized in questionable fiction: they do not use kidnapped cats or mongrels as "bait" but concentrate on exercising their proteges down to the minimum weight at which the dogs still enjoy maximum strength.

These processes are detailed in almost-unobtainable publications such as "Thirty Years With Fighting Dogs" by Armitage and "My Life With The Pitbull" by Colby, published in the 1930's.

Oddly, most real dogfighters love their animals in a primordial, nineteenth-century sort of way, but the great majority are past retirement. Despite the recent rush (and current defection) of "hobbyists," not many younger men are filling the gap.

Three years ago the Nebraska Humane Society euthanized about 400 pitbulls and crosses in a single year as the members of the shadowy subculture began leaving pitbulls. By now most of them have moved on.

Where to?

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P.S. We plan to continue the comic section.